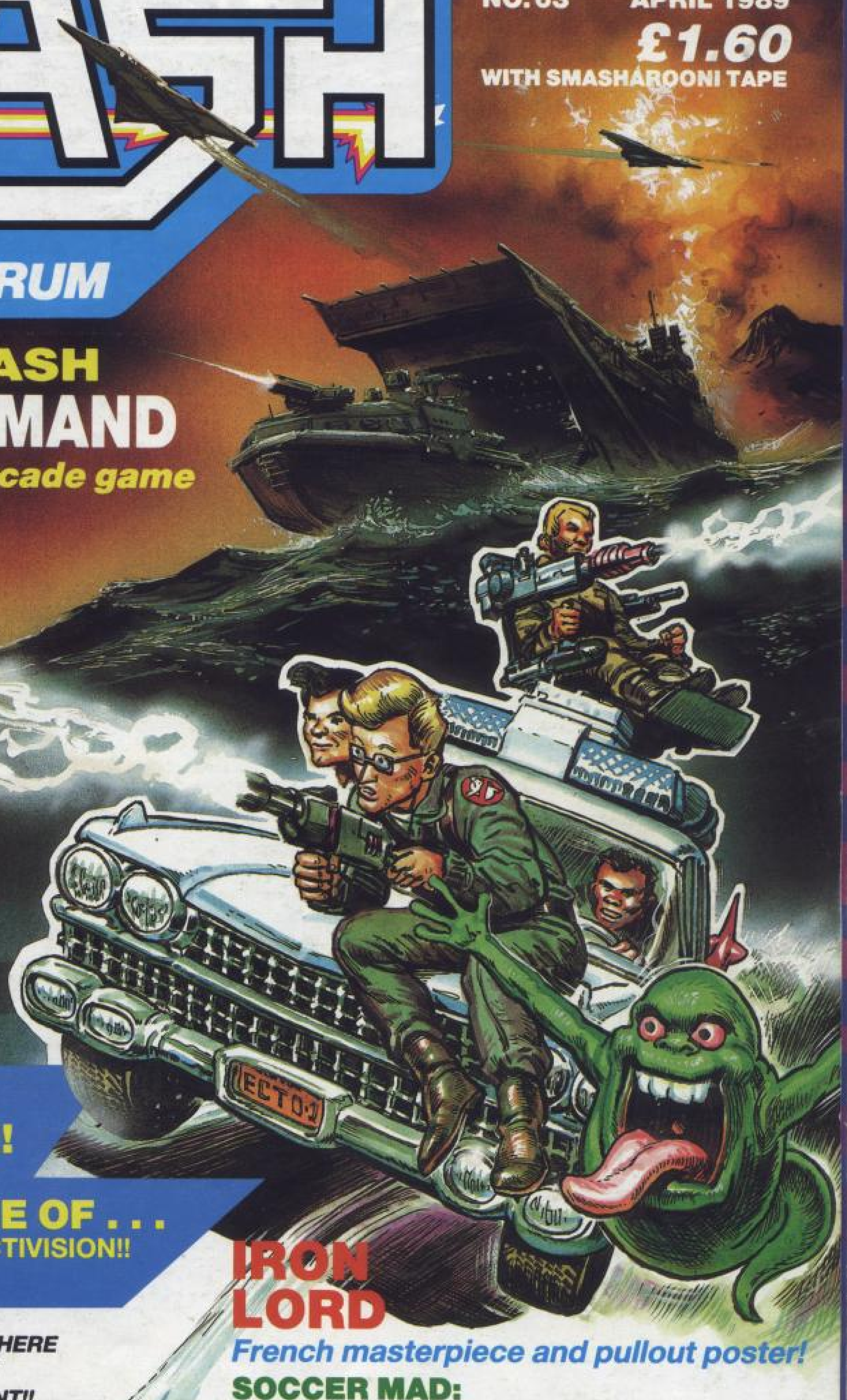
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CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM

A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
NO.63 APRIL 1989
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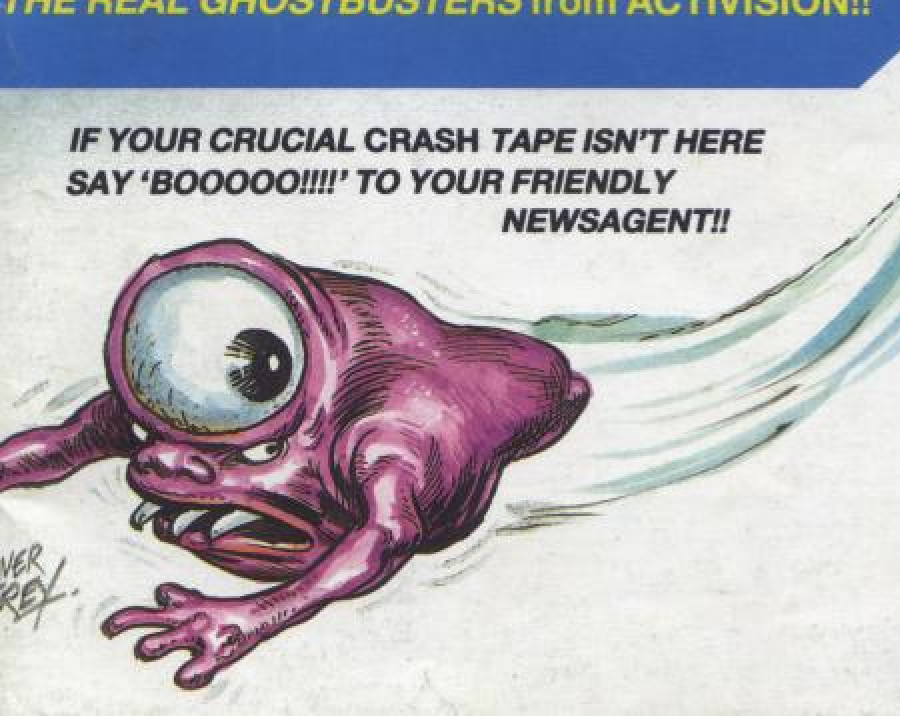
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![CRASH ZX SPECTRUM]

CONTENTS



ON A RAMBLE WITH ED STUART

As another Editor said first editorials are difficult, especially when you're slumped in front of your computer after – hopefully - finishing most of the magazine. I hope you like the 'Crucial CRASH Tape', it wasn't easy getting a free Smash game and such a great demo. Thanks to the companies involved there and of course Richard Eddy for arranging it all.

The quality of *The Real Ghostbusters* demo, thanks to Mr Micro, is indicative of the high standard we've come to expect and receive from the Spectrum. For the moment, at least, the Spectrum is not only the cheapest machine around, it's also the one with most of the best software. Of course the ST and Amiga have some dazzling games graphically, but programmers have got a long way to go before they know the 68000 chip as well as the Z80 – and it shows. Even coin-op conversions are often better on the Speccy, retaining playability while intricate 16-bit graphics ruin things with sluggish responses – step forward *Afterburner* and *Operation Wolf*.

But if the quality of licensed games and coin-op conversions has never been higher on the Spectrum, then at the same time the number of high quality, original material written specifically for it has never been lower. Apart from budget practically every game is written to be released on all formats, meaning that very few make best use of the Spectrum. Games in the old days, like *Sabre Wulf*, *Lords Of Midnight* and *Full Throttle*, combined imaginative presentation with gameplay designed for the machine. And not only were the games fun, they also had lots of lastability.

Yet, as always, there are exceptions to the rule – and some conversions make absolutely spectacular use of the Spectrum with similarly superb gameplay. The obvious example is *Carrier Command*, programmed over two years by Andy Onions. Simply putting the game on the Spectrum was something of a miracle, and the dramatic improvements in gameplay are amazing. The only other example I can think of showing similar thoughtfulness in conversion is *Starglider*, also converted by Realtime Software.

For the most part, though, such talent and dedication is sadly lacking. And if one software house were to launch a range of mid-price games, designed with the attention to detail in playability and machine capability as Ultimate, Micromega and Beyond once did, then I think Spectrum gamesplayers would have a lot more Smashes to choose from than in this issue.

In the meantime all I can say is look out for *Carrier Command* – it's even better than that other classic mega-challenge; *Elite*!

THE CRUCIAL CRASH CASSETTE

Cor blimey, if it isn't another of them tapes on the cover. But strike a light, this ain't no ordinary 'mega-tape', it's got the CRASH Smash *Sophistry* on it – the COMPLETE game – plus a faboroomi first level of *The Real Ghostbusters* (details on page 24). This month CRASH also has an EXCLUSIVE REVIEW of *Carrier Command* and some incredible news about Amstrad. Other magazines? Pah! They're just a loada SUperficial dYSentery!!!

GHOSTS IN THE MACHINE

You've seen the film, watched the cartoon, even read the comic, and now you can play the computer game! *The Real Ghostbusters* are coming to exorcise *your* neighbourhood. And we've got EXCLUSIVE details about this chartbusting licence.

Parlez vous français? Well neither do we, but we've been talking (in English!) to up-and-coming French software house, Ubi Soft. Their next epic game is *Iron Lord* – we've got EXCLUSIVE news and a brilliant pull-out poster . . . just pour vous.

CRASH reader Steven Martin didn't know what he was in for when he won our Spitting Image competition. His prize was to be immortalised in latex, by the famous puppetmakers themselves. Mark Caswell went along to see how it was done.



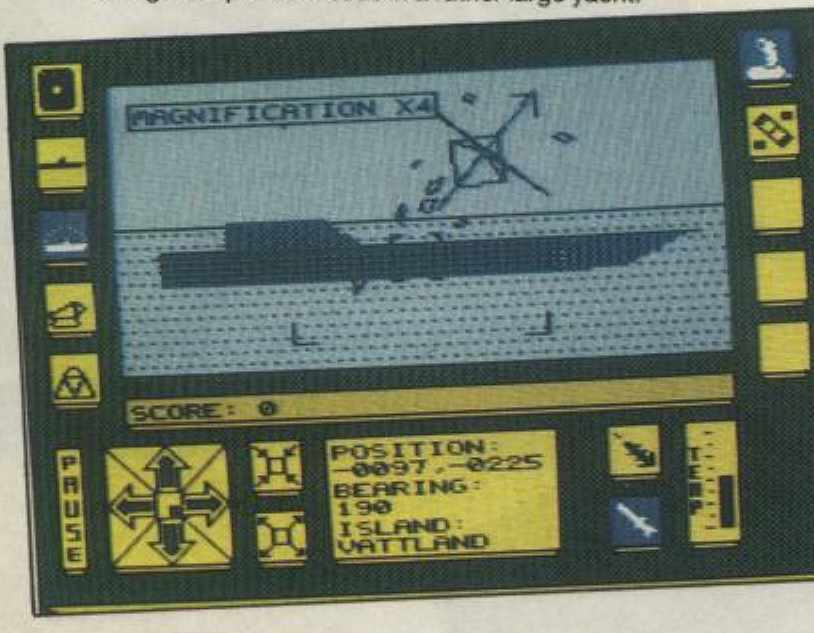
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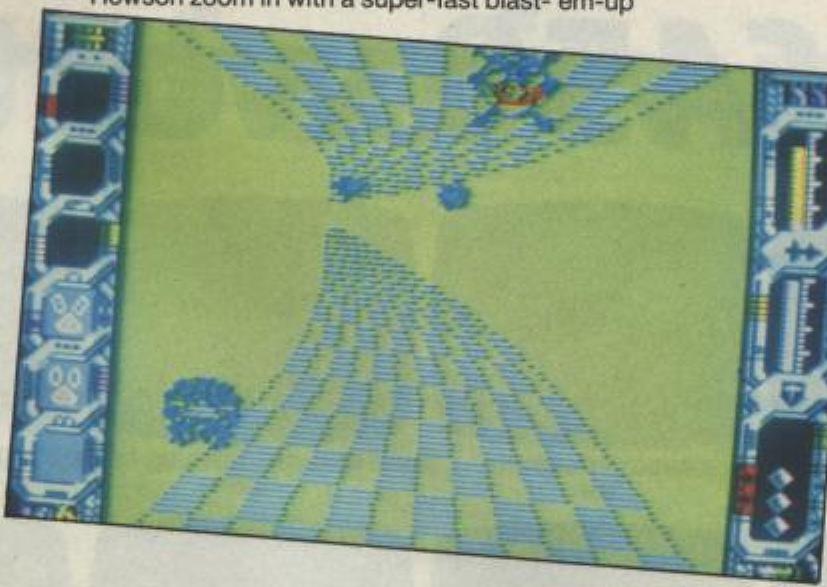
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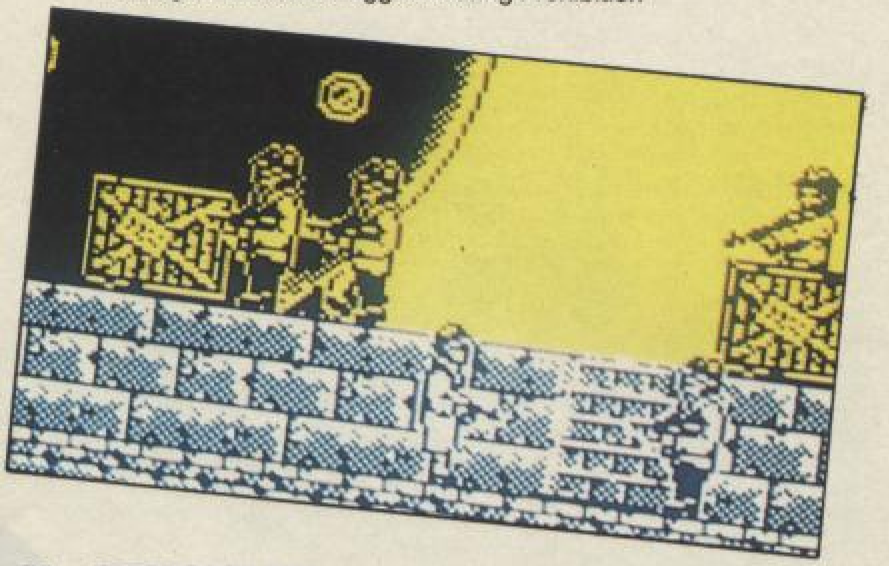
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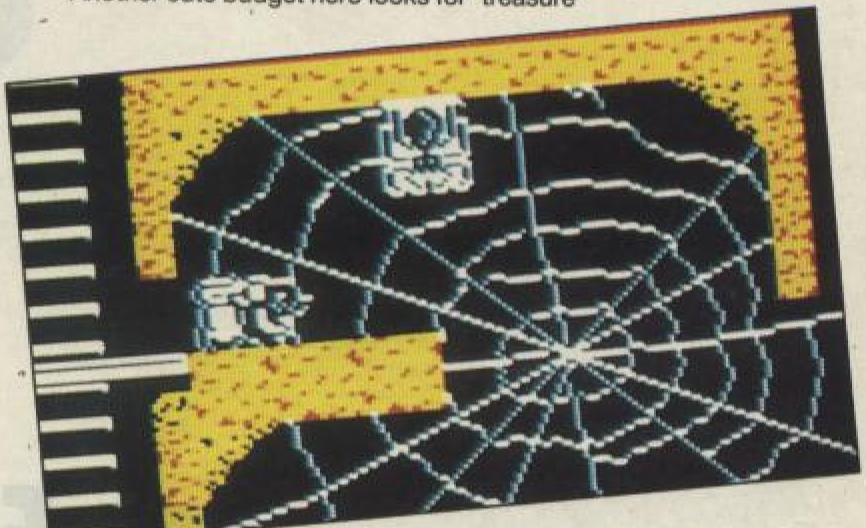
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FULL INDEX

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NEWS

GAME FOR GOSSIP

TRAGEDY HAS struck the computer industry with the news that ***Bob's Full House*** is *not* to be released (well, **Domark** think it's a tragedy). Apparently **Domark** negotiated a licence which did not permit the use of **Bob Monkhouse**'s name or image. The lawyer concerned has been shot. Oh well, I suppose they could always call it *Fred's Full House*! (Not unless they pay me! – Fred.)

Watch it, young man! After clipping some fans round the earhole, **Brian Clough** is making a return to the Spectrum – he obviously needs the money to pay off his £5000 fine! CDS Software are rereleasing *Brian Clough's Football Fortunes* (42%, Issue 38), a computer-moderated board game, at the new 'low' price of £7.99 cass, £9.99 disk.

Yet more craziness should soon be provided by ***Crazy Cars II***. The sequel to **Titus**' first fast driving game (65%, Issue 52) it involves racing across four American states in a bid to smash a stolen car racket run by corrupt policemen. 360° spins, road junctions, and road blocks are all promised. Also imminent from Titus is ***Titan***. Another mad scientist has been let out of the loony bin, and set up an 80 world (!) game which attracts the 'wildest adventurers'. Unfortunately the game tends to kill people who make mistakes in guiding the powerball with a magical and magnetic bat. Although it sounds ominously like a *Break-Out* game, there's apparently some ultra-fast, omni-directional scrolling.

Mike Singleton fans will be pleased to know that he is currently negotiating with **Telecomsoft** (Firebird/Rainbird/Silverbird) about the release of the third game in the classic Midnight trilogy (*Lords Of Midnight, Doomdark's Revenge*), titled ***Eye Of The Moon***. The present discussion mainly concerns which formats the game will eventually appear on – Telecomsoft seem to want 16-bit only. But hopefully a Spectrum version of the long-awaited epic will be released sometime in 1990. Meanwhile, Mike's **Maelstrom Games** company is working on ***Star Lord***, a 'massive galactic strategy game'. All versions (including Spectrum, of course) are due out towards the end of this year.

Another Spectrum veteran is **Pete Cooke** (author of *Tau Ceti* and *Earthlight*). He's currently tuning up the Spectrum version of a Geoff Crammond 3-D driving game. This should be ready for release by Telecomsoft (them again?!), 'later in the year'.

Also hard at work for Telecomsoft are **Graftgold**, currently developing the sequel to *Bubble Bobble*, titled *Rainbow Island*. One or two players can take part, but this time the main characters are humans rather than cuddly dinosaurs (shame!). And instead of spitting bubbles, the humans yawn rainbows by which they can climb up the screens. Featuring 'colourful vertical scrolling' the game should be finished by the end of April.

Probe Software have been keeping extremely busy lately, working on no less than five Spectrum games. Two of these are for **US Gold**: ***Out Run Europa***, the turbocharged sequel to the classic driving game, and the mysterious ***Heavy Metal***! Probe are also busy doing a conversion of the ***Mr Heli*** Irem coin-op for Firebird, and ***Trick Ramp Crazy***, for Silverbird. The fifth game currently being developed is currently titled *Crazy Jet Racer*, apparently pretty darn hot it's just been placed with a software house – preview nex' munf!

Wire-frame specialists, **Vektor Grafix** (of *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* fame) are currently putting the finishing touches to an **Activision** game, provisionally titled ***Bomber***. Sub-company **Sprytes** are also doing several Spectrum conversions, but they're not yet telling us which ones!

Finally, good news for 48K owners: the 'impossible' has been done – Ocean's brilliant arcade adventure 128K-only ***Where Time Stood Still*** has been crammed into 48K!

AMSTRAD'S NEW HARDWARE

LONG-AWAITED Amstrad hardware, such as an add-on disk drive for the 48K/128K/+2 Spectrums, are finally ready for release. An official press launch should have happened by the time you read this, but already some details have leaked from Amstrad's Brentwood HQ. Add-ons are said to include a £199 word processor package (consisting of a rebadged PCW 8256 printer, interface, mouse and word processor/spreadsheet software), an £89 slimline add-on disk drive (standard 3-inch, 180K per side) and a £29 +3 'HQ' system – a datasette with a special interface curing the +3's legendary sound tuning problems.

These new products are said to be a clear rebuff to industry cynics who said Amstrad had abandoned the games machine market for business computers and satellite TV. Independent Spectrum add-on makers are clearly worried about Amstrad's renewed interest in the Spectrum, but MGT's Alan Miles says customers are likely to be dubious about the quality of the Amstrad hardware.

The imminent launch of the add-ons has also started a wave of rumours about an Amstrad ST/Amiga beater. The required technical expertise could come from Acorn, according to several industry sources. Apparently Acorn are prepared to provide Archimedes circuitboards at near cost price, if Amstrad agree to case, package and market the resulting machines. Priced at around £399 the Amstrad 'RISC32' would wipe out the ST and Amiga, and resulting sales would provide substantial royalties for Acorn. Pressed on the subject Alan Sugar would only say; 'Amstrad have always put customers first and you can trust us not to abandon them now.'





SAM UPDATE

BY THE TIME you read this **MGT** should have finally met with software houses to organize support for their 8-bit wonder machine; the **SAM Coupé**. Already they've had lots of enquiries from programmers interested in writing for it, and making their latest Spectrum games compatible with its 'Spectrum mode'. The wider public are showing strong interest as well. 2,000 existing MGT customers have applied for the no-commitment reservations offered by MGT, while one foreign distributor has already placed an order for 20,000 units. Unsurprisingly **Alan Miles** now expects to easily surpass his first year target of 56,000 units sold.

Due to these expected sales MGT have begun expanding their mail order service with the aim of eventually dispatching hardware within a day of receiving the order. There is also likely to be an advanced technical hotline available to users willing to pay a subscriber fee. The existing helpline will continue, however, for normal users asking basic questions about how to get their hardware running. MGT expect a lot more such questions if talks succeed in placing SAM in chain stores.

Also aiming to be on the high street shelves is the **Konix Multi-System** console which MGT welcome, since it also comes from Wales and is aimed at a slightly different market. While the Konix is sold as the 'ultimate toy', SAM is a serious computer, designed to appeal to the education market, technical fans and overseas manufacturers. But at the same time it has a strong games potential. It has 256K (128K more than the Konix), a better sound chip than the Amiga and static graphics to rival the ST. While technical experts doubt an 8-bit chip, albeit a fast one, can run quickly enough to compete with 16-bit machines everyone agrees the basic design is very clever.

After its launch in July, MGT plan a host of add-ons including a dot matrix printer and monitor. There's also to be a mouse which overwrites the cursor controls, so it should work with games written for a joystick. For more serious users MGT plan an ST/Amiga style WIMP system, with the mouse moving a cursor around the screen, pulling down function menus and opening 'windows'. For the future MGT are considering more radical add-ons to increase the machine's processing power further.

For more on MGT see Tech Niche on page 60.

RAZZ JAZZ

DETAILS continue to emerge about the arcade ambitions of **ACG**, the people behind **Ultimate** and **Rare**. For over two and a half years ACG engineers have been developing their own coin-op hardware and now that it's virtually complete details are emerging about its specification. With one Megabyte of on-board memory it is based around a Z80 'lookalike' Hitachi CPU, running at 10 MHz (compared to 4MHz for the Spectrum, and 7MHz for the Amiga).

Graphical capabilities are impressive. Although screen resolution is relatively low (256 columns x 222 lines), up to 192 colours may be displayed simultaneously, chosen from a palette of 260,000! High speed is ensured by a number of hardware scrolls, and a unique shape-drawing system. One byte of memory is used for each pixel; the bottom six bits control the colour while the top two determine the direction the next pixel is in. This allows shapes to easily be turned upside down and flipped sideways.

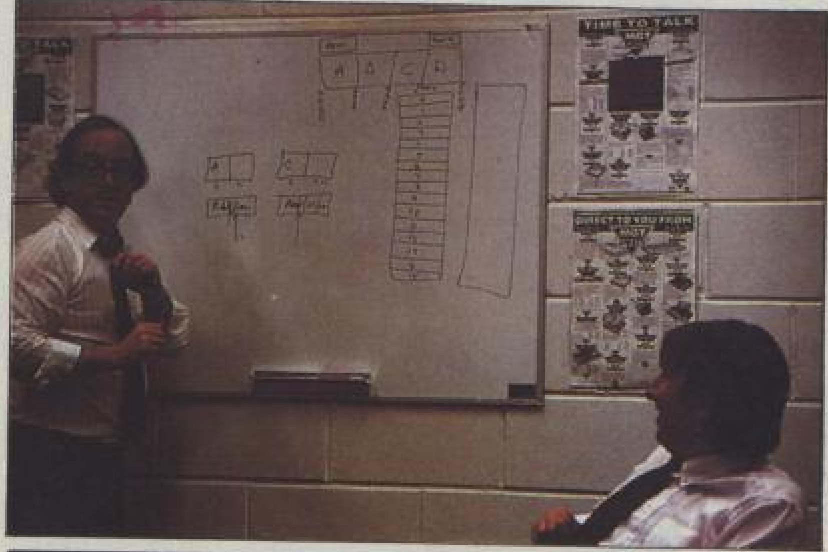
Sound is handled by a separate Jazz board (where do they get these names from?!). This utilises stereo Yamaha sound chips with (in the current prototype) a total of 12 channels.

Both Razz and Jazz boards will form the heart of new ACG coin-ops, including **Jon Ritman**'s imminent soccer game (I can't wait! – Phil).

But ACG aren't alone in developing a coin-op system. **Rainbow Games**, a sister company of Rainbow Arts, are currently working on a 32-bit **Pluto** motherboard. This allows up to 128 colours per scan line and playfield, chosen from a palette of 260,000 (the same as Razz). Screen resolution is programmable up to a maximum 640 x 480 pixels, and the graphic system includes hardware zoom and turning. Sound specifications are also impressive: 16 channel stereo.

The first coin-op to utilise Pluto will be *Dark Chamber*, a magical shoot-'em-up, followed by *Monster Olympics*.







▲ What's this? Are relations between MicroProse and Electronic Arts so bad that they took up arms?! Well not exactly, the two software houses recently took each other on at the Combat Game. Teams from both firms armed themselves with paint guns and went into 'battle'. Extensive training on *Airborne Ranger* enabled the MicroProse 'Combat Crew' to storm Electronic Arts' base to claim victory!

A QUICK PLUG . . .

Der . . . now is this the computer plug or the one for the toaster? Oh no, I've pulled out the wrong one! Oh well, at least I can scoff my burnt toast while I try to remember 3000 lines of Basic. If only I'd bought some **Identiplugs**. These nifty pieces of plastic fit onto any normal plug, and the protruding (oo-er!) identity tag tells you which device the plug belongs to. So now you can unplug the TV, safe in the knowledge that you're not thawing all the food in the freezer. That is, as long as you didn't accidentally put the tags on the wrong plugs!

Identiplugs cost 99p for a pack of three (of the same title – very useful, who's got three kettles?!) or £5.00 for twenty, including VAT and postage, and are available from **IDENTIPLUGS, Unit 39, Whitehouse Enterprise Centre, Whitehouse Rd, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE15 6EP. (Tel: 091 2280068).**

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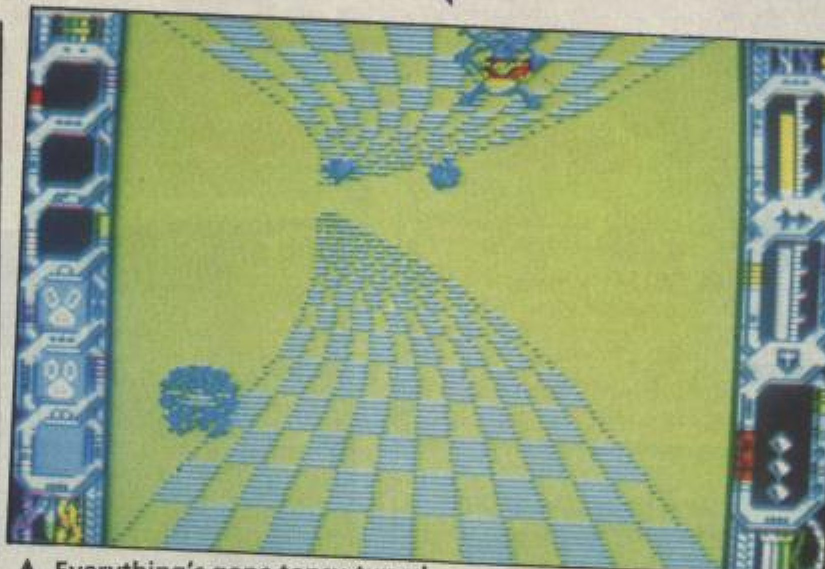
ELIMINATOR

● ***High quality blasting from Hewson***

Producer **Hewson**
ET benefit **£7.99 cass**
£12.99 disk
Author **John Wildsmith**

Cor, this eliminating business is great fun! It all started six months ago when I saw a job vacancy in the window of the local Inland Revenue office: 'Young xenophobic maniac needed to travel to various planets and eradicate their populations. Certificate of mental instability welcome but not obligatory.' Well, I kicked in the door and shot the smiling receptionist (I always shoot first and ask questions afterwards, not that I get much sense then). After about ten minutes a young chap in a bulletproof vest turned up, 'You're applying for the *Eliminator* job,' he said.

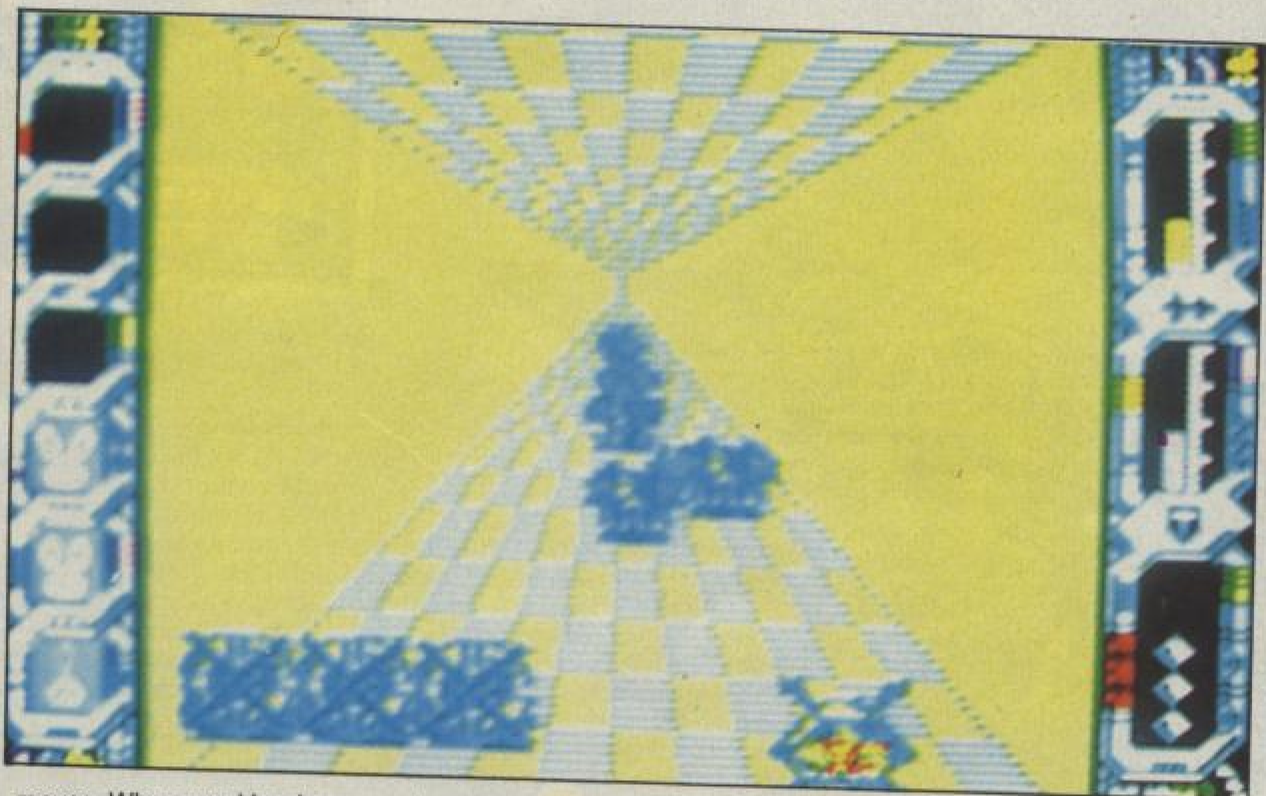
I was, and ET (Employment Training) still had a place for me. So here I am, rocketing down the highways and zapping all that



▲ **Everything's gone topsy-turvy!**

Watching the road disappear round bend is most fun. The aliens are pretty slick too, popping up off the road and swirling at me with all guns blazing. To start off with they seem a bit indistinct, but once you get used to them you just can't stop blasting 'em. Have to be accurate too though, there's not much ammo and no energy recharging until the end of the level. I also have to be careful about collisions – since I never wear a safety belt it's instant death if I hit an alien. Then there's all the barriers they put up, some of them block the road completely and you have to use a ramp to flip over and travel along the roof! Others have segments you can shoot out with a steady aim. It's a great life, *eliminating* things, and that's why I decided to take part in this ad for ET!

MARK 84%



▲ **Watch out for those lethal barriers!**

moves. Whenever I land on a new planet I start off with just a single-fire weapon, but pods can be collected to add-on weapons or replenish ammo.

Of course I always travel at top speed, and the chequered road zooms by incredibly smoothly.

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: fast 3-D scrolling
Sound: loud 128K ingame tune
General rating: a fast and playable 'roadblasting' shoot-'em-up

NICK ***Eliminator*** **looks a lot like** ***Trailblazer*****, or even** ***Plexar*****, but it's superfast and very slickly presented with a neat 128K ingame tune and some nicely-drawn graphics. My only reservation that, unlike other versions of the game, there's no password system so that once you've completed a few levels you no longer have to keep playing through them. A fun game for a while, it might eventually prove repetitive.**

83%

SKIP THOSE LEVELS

- Use the grid pattern to line yourself up when approaching the barriers.
- Lots of the later weapons are pretty useless really; collect lots of ammo instead!
- Don't waste ammo; you need some to shoot your way through some of the barriers.
- Send ten million pounds in used notes to Skippy, CRASH, PO Box 10 . . .

Although Mark loves this (probably because it's even faster than *Afterburner*) I've got my doubts. The graphics are fast and fairly smooth, but the screen often looks a bit cluttered. Still, the concept is OK, and the general feel is that of a well-polished and playable game which somehow falls short of being brilliant.

MIKE 78%

Presentation	79%
Graphics	78%
Sound	79%
Playability	81%
Addictive qualities	82%
OVERALL	**82%**

CARRIER COMMAND

● *Take command of a plastic bag!*

Okay, think you can handle anything? How about an entire aircraft carrier, including six Manta attack aircraft and six amphibious tanks? The carrier's semi-automated, but you're still responsible for everything from setting repair priorities to remotely-piloting a Manta on its low-level bombing runs. No problem? Well what about strategic command of the entire *Carrier Command* operation – not only plotting the carrier's course, but also setting

Producer **Rainbird**
Thousand Island dressing
£14.95 cass
£15.95 disk
Author **Andy Onions, music by Dave Lowe**

production priorities of the factory islands you'll be building?

You still think you're up to it Admiral? . . . Great! I'll give you the full briefing then. First the background details. There's a chain of 32 islands in the Southern Ocean resting on a large, geological fault which can be used to produce huge quantities of energy. In 2166 there's obviously nothing more valuable and we've had built, in secret, two automated carriers to set up resource centres on all the islands. But as soon as sea trials began for the Epsilon and Omega the latter 'malfunctioned'. The terrorist organization Stanza has inserted a virus, turning the Omega into a war machine.



▲ The map screen: your carrier and three Mantas are to the left of the island



▲ Arming a Manta on the fitting screen



As we speak the Omega has arrived at the islands and may have already begun establishing a network of resource, factory and defence islands. Resource islands use geothermal energy to manufacture raw materials, automatically shipped to factory islands where they'll be converted into various supplies. All the islands have missile silos, but defence islands also have 'Bat Caves' which launch aircraft. To combat the Omega you must set up your own island network, to produce vital supplies such as fuel for your carrier and even replacement Mantas.

As soon as you've got some islands producing supplies you must set how many units of an item you want, and set priorities for each of the nineteen different products. All the finished items are then shipped to a stockpile island where you can pick them up. Merely keeping your carrier

MARK After umpteen years (well two) of waiting for the Spectrum version, you can now pilot your huge armoured ship around friendly and not so friendly (in fact downright hostile) islands. Of course, the enemy carrier gives you plenty of aggro, and I found that most of my games were spent chasing around reclaiming the islands that I had managed to conquer. But *Carrier Command* has converted surprisingly well from 16 to 8-bit. Especially impressive are the wire frame/solid 3-D substitutes which zip about the screen at a surprisingly fast rate. But what's even more amazing is that all the options and gameplay of the original have been retained. The many icons are a little confusing to use at first but the comprehensive instruction manual soon sets you straight. We've waited a long time for *Carrier Command* and I'm pleased to say that it doesn't disappoint.

97%



▲ Both carriers can be seen from a high-flying Manta

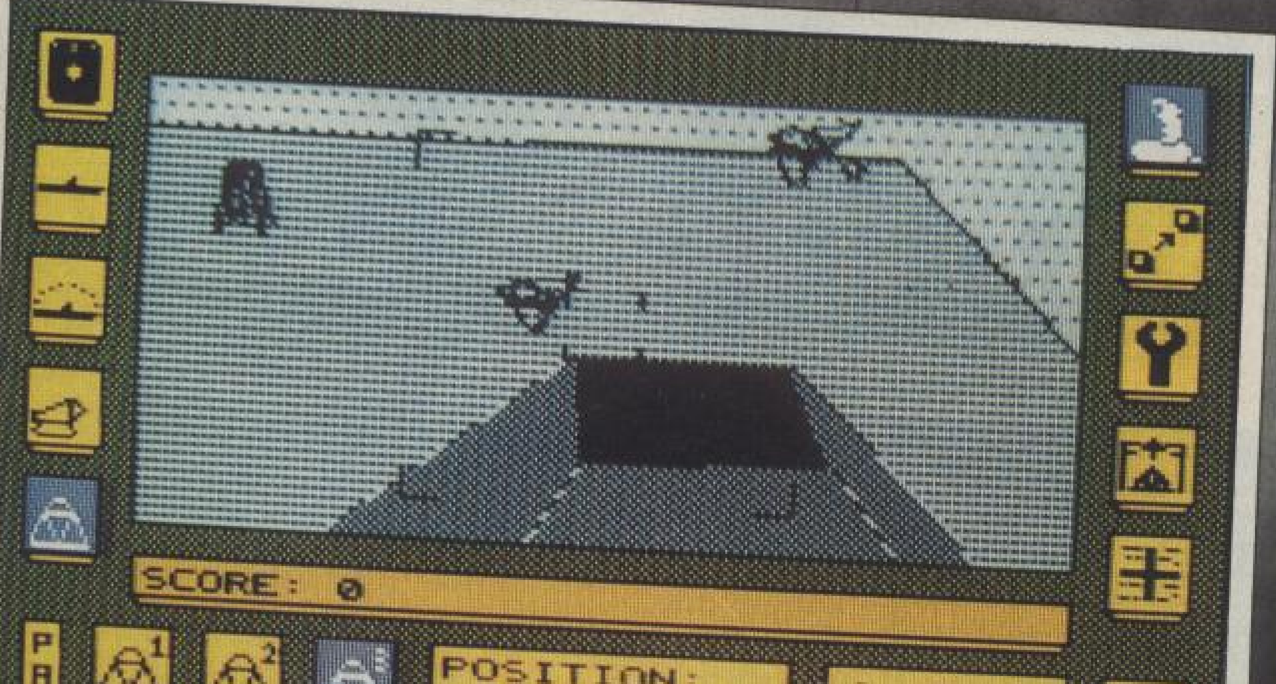
running smoothly is hardly going to win the game though, for that you've got to go on the offensive. And for certain you're well equipped for it. So let's go on a quick tour of the Epsilon. Starting at the top there's the weapons turret, it has a magnification factor of up to eight and allows you to manually aim either a laser or Hammerhead missiles. For defence there's two missile decoys which can be deployed in a variety of patterns. The more they get hit though, the less effective they become and if the carrier gets hit then it's time for the repair screen. This shows a diagram of the carrier and its eight different sections, from superstructure to radar to repair systems. It's up to you to set repair priorities.

The point of the carrier, however, is what it carries. The bulk of the offensive firepower is provided by the Multi-role Aircraft for Nautical Tactical Assault, or Mantas. There's room for six onboard, but only three can ever be active at one time. These can be armed with Quasar lasers, Assassin homing missiles or Quaker bouncing bombs. As with all the vehicles you can either program Mantas to go to a specific point, or take direct control of them looking out the cockpit window.

Also onboard the Epsilon are six Walrus amphibious tanks. These can be armed with Avatar lasers or Harbinger wireguided missiles (you control the missile in-flight). They can also carry ACCB's which, when planted on a neutral island, will construct a resource, defence or factory centre.

Most of the combat in the *Carrier Command* mission is with enemy islands. The most direct way of taking them over is to destroy the command centre, usually by Manta attack leaving the carrier just out of range of enemy missiles. Once the command centre is destroyed the missile launchers blow up and you can use a Walrus tank to plant an ACCB. Alternatively you can provide covering fire, possibly using a Manta to destroy the 'Bat cave', for a Walrus with a virus bomb. If you succeed in getting to the command centre with the Walrus, the virus bomb can be fired into it turning the island over to your command without destroying all its buildings.

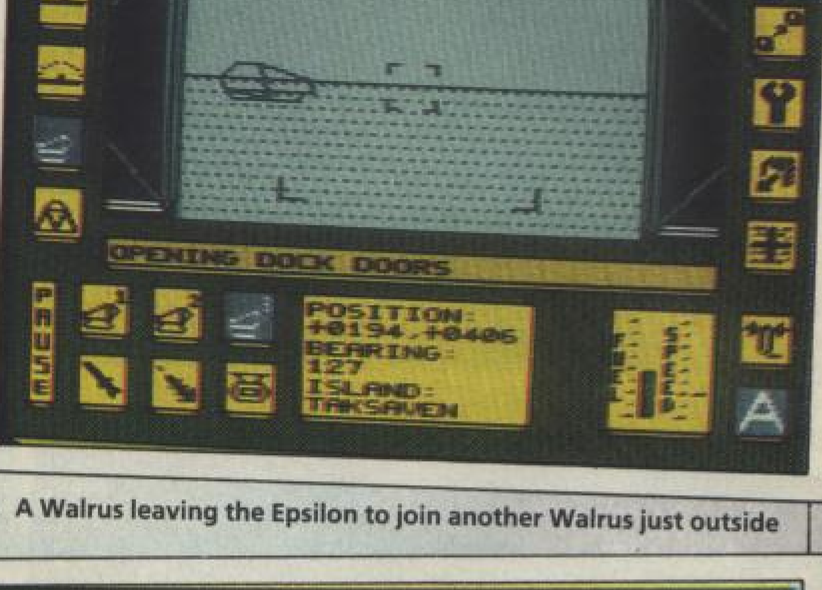
The ultimate objective of *Carrier Command* is to reclaim all 32 islands, but along the way you've got to take on the enemy carrier which has its own deadly armed aircraft to protect it. Tracking it down [illegible]



programming *Carrier Command* is something of a miracle. It's taken one of 1988's most revolutionary and complex ST/Amiga games and put it all into a 128K Spectrum. A time accleration feature has been added so cruising between islands is extremely quick. More importantly, however, is the dramatic improvement in gameplay with both the strategy and arcade elements significantly tweaked. An example: to take an island on the ST you simply stand off-shore in your carrier and use the laser turret on the command centre. On the Spectrum the laser has been weakened, forcing you either to come in range of the islands missiles or use a Manta.

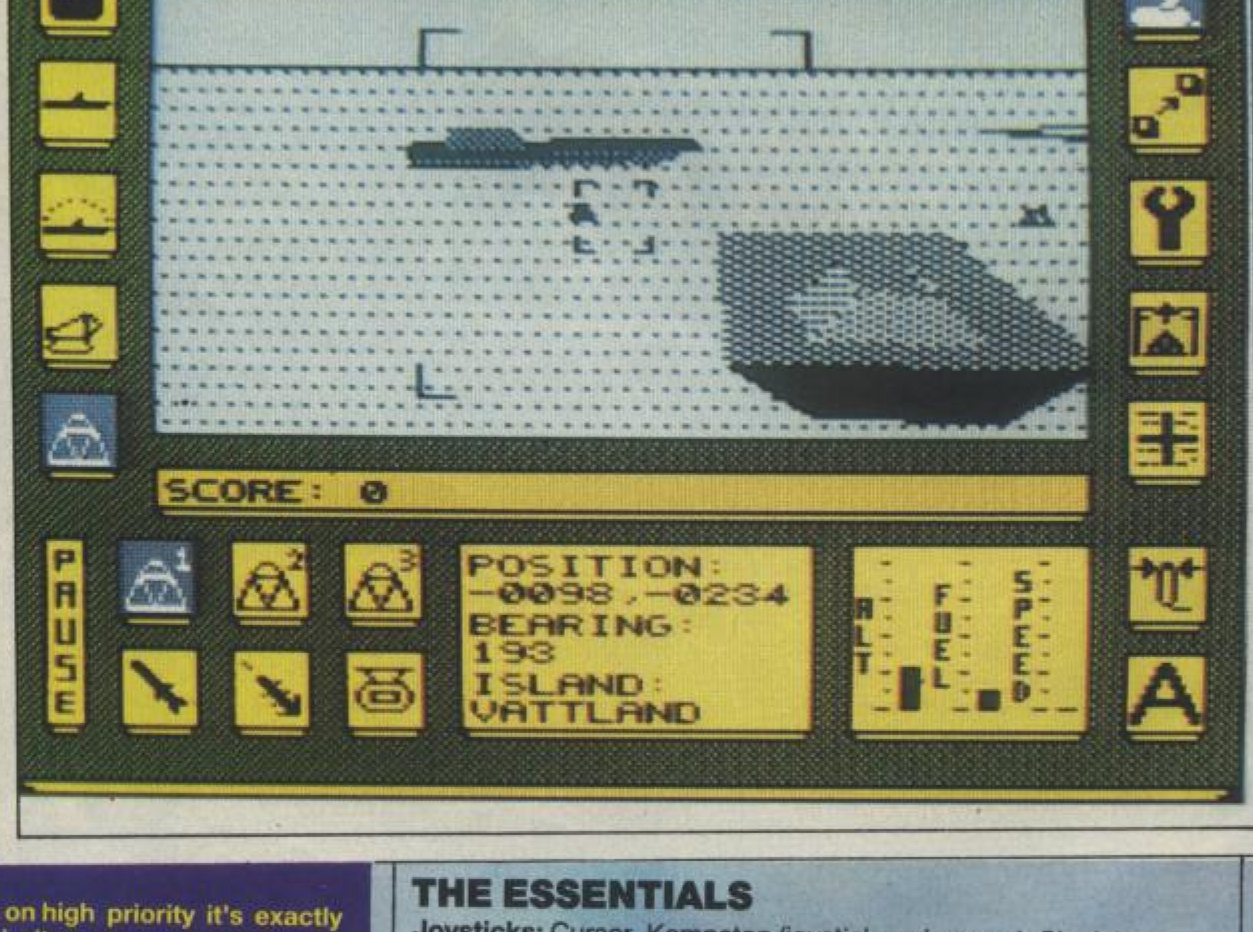
Most games you play for a few hours and you've seen all there is. *Carrier Command* you play for a few hours just to mess around with the controls, of which there's lots, but so good is the icon system that you rarely need to refer to the instruction manual. And just as dazzling as the gameplay are the graphics. Apart from wireframe missiles, aircraft and tanks everything is in solid 3-D, yet you can zoom around solid islands and volcanoes in a Manta at ST speed. This is quite simply an incredible game which will take ages, and lots of saves, to complete even in the action game. 200% Value For Money.

STUART 98%



▲ A Walrus leaving the Epsilon to join another Walrus just outside

▶ The Omega about to be hit by a well-aimed missile



CARRY ON CRUISING

- All the islands are connected by undersea pipelines, but if a red island is between two blue islands then supplies will move between them very slowly, if at all.
- When controlling Mantas and Walruses, be careful not to stray too far from the carrier, or your vehicle will lose radio contact and be destroyed.
- Protect your stockpile island before all others or you'll lose your stored resources.
- Don't let the carrier's fuel level get too low, or you'll be stranded!
- When advancing, always move the stockpile island to keep up – after taking all its stocks.
- Use priority systems intelligently – there's only a certain amount of resources/repair units, if you put everything on high priority it's exactly the same as everything on low priority.

What? You mean it's actually here? This isn't an April Fool joke, is it? Anyway, after such a long wait it's sure to be a disappointment. But wait a minute, what's this I spy with my little aye aye? All the gameplay from the 16-bit versions and superb solid 3-D graphics, that's what! There's just so much to do; invading islands while controlling up to six vehicles plus the carrier itself. But the huge range of options offered would cause headaches if it weren't for the brilliant icon system. It's dead easy to use once you've found your sea legs, even for an outright landlubber like me! Being a bit of a closet strategy fan, I just love the brain-bending tactics involved in *Carrier Command* – the game is immensely absorbing without making you at all seasick!

PHIL 96%

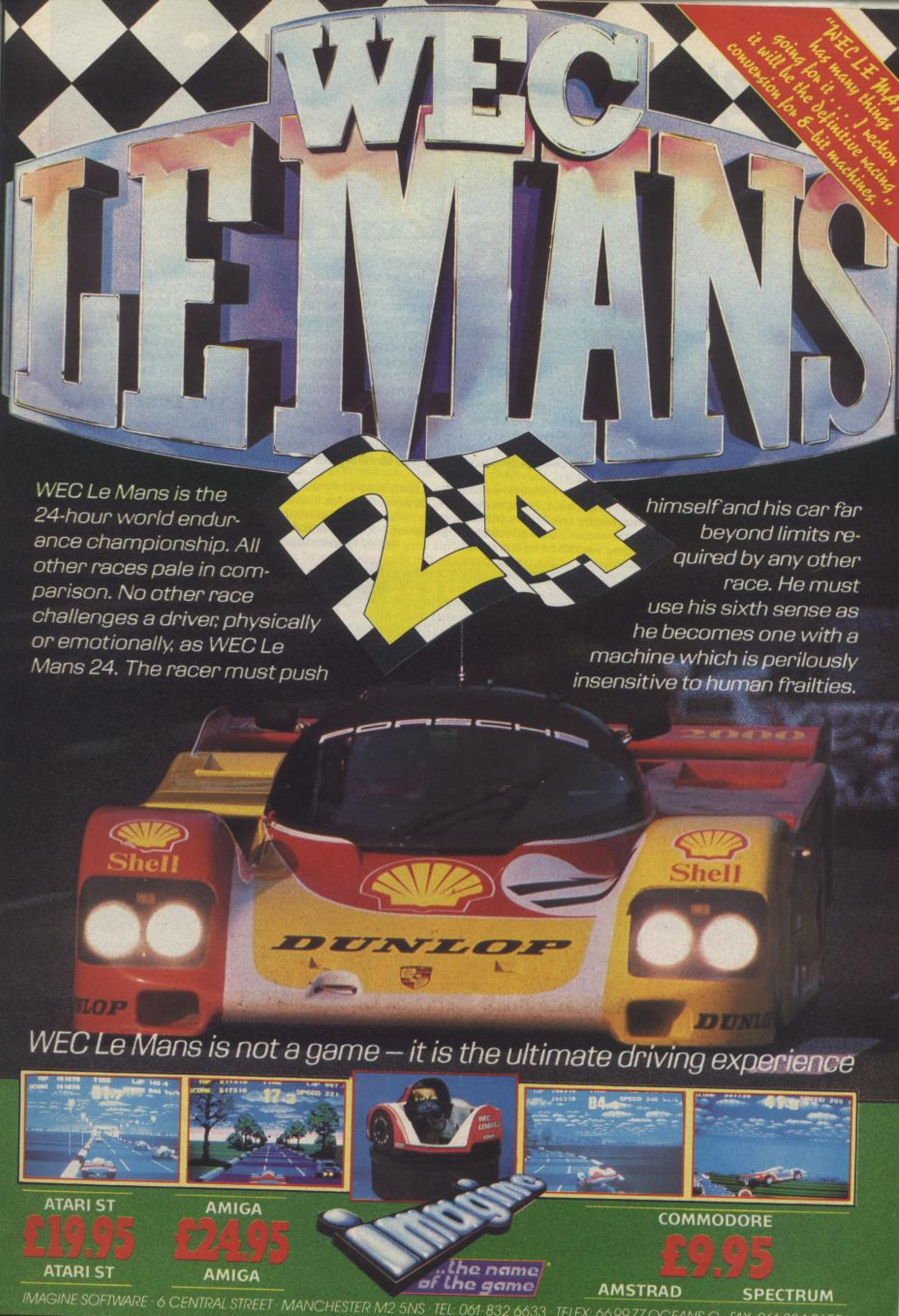
THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston (joystick and mouse), Sinclair
Graphics: amazingly fast, solid 3-D
Sound: a really catchy title tune and a variety of good in-game effects
Options: definable keys. Action or strategy game
General rating: the best sea-faring game ever – it was well worth waiting for

STOP PRESS!
Due, in part, to comments made by CRASH reviewers Andy Onions has decided to tweak arcade gameplay and possibly add something to make games last even longer. This could further delay the game's release, so don't harass Rainbird for copies until the CRASH Hotline says it's on sale.

Presentation	98%
Graphics	98%
Sound	96%
Playability	96%
Addictive qualities	98%

OVERALL 97%


WEC LE MANS
"WEC LE MAN[S]
has many things
going for it . . . I reckon
it will be the definitive racing
conversion for 8-bit machines."
24
WEC Le Mans is the 24-hour world endurance championship. All other races pale in comparison. No other race challenges a driver, physically or emotionally, as WEC Le Mans 24. The racer must push himself and his car far beyond limits required by any other race. He must use his sixth sense as he becomes one with a machine which is perilously insensitive to human frailties.
Shell
DUNLOP
WEC Le Mans is not a game – it is the ultimate driving experience
ATARI ST
£19.95
ATARI ST
AMIGA
£24.95
AMIGA
imagine
..the name of the game
COMMODORE
£9.95
AMSTRAD
SPECTRUM
IMAGINE SOFTWARE · 6 CENTRAL STREET · MANCHESTER M2 5NS · TEL: 061-832 6633



DNA WARRIOR

● *Battling in the bloodstream*

Producer **Cascade**
Miniature money **£9.95 cass**
Author **Stuart Scott**

Prepare yourself for a fantastic voyage. You've volunteered to undertake a dangerous mission inside Nick Roberts's stomach! With Raquel Welch by your side, you must guide a microscopic ship through places where only 9-inch pizzas have ventured before.

The reason behind this strange mission is that Nick, an expert at poking games, recently decided to do a similar thing to himself. He implanted raw DNA (a kind of groovy acid) and a growth accelerator into his own brain, in a bid to improve his intelligence. Unfortunately, the experiment failed, and left the Tips man with a rapidly-expanding noddlebox (no wonder he's been getting big-headed!).

Before Nick's head explodes, you must reach his brain and kill the implant with the help of a growth inhibitor, broken into six parts, scattered around his body. While doing battle with Nick's natural defences, you must find keys to enable you to pass through blood vessels to other horizontally-scrolling body parts.

While floating around in someone else's body doesn't appeal to me a great deal, this game is initially quite playable. Control of the craft is a bit suspect though: even with the speed-up feature active, it moves very much like a drunken tortoise. Despite its unusual setting, *DNA Warrior* is another unexceptional shoot-'em-up.

MARK 56%

MIKE ***DNA Warrior*** **seems like a fairly well-programmed beast, but unfortunately its addictiveness is sorely marred by one or two frustrating factors. The ship-turning procedure can be absolutely maddening – it takes one whole screen-width to turn around! This very nearly wrecks the enjoyment of the game, because the ship often flies all around the screen by accident, usually ending in the loss of a life! The graphics are fine, but the action is very slow: unlike most similar shoot-'em-ups, it doesn't romp along at a fast rate – instead, it crawls!** ***DNA Warrior*** **isn't the sort of game likely to appeal to blast freaks – it's too frustrating to be addictive, and too slow to be particularly playable.**

50%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: not bad, if a mite dull
Sound: blip, blip, blip . . .
General rating: there are far more enjoyable ways to explore someone's body!

Presentation	71%
Graphics	76%
Sound	27%
Playability	57%
Addictive qualities	51%

OVERALL 53%

WANDERER

Producer **Elite**
Dual vision **£8.99 cass**
£12.99 disk
Author **Walking Circles**

Way back in 1984 there was 3-D space game called *3 Deep Space*. If you looked at it through the supplied spex at a distance of about 15 feet – when you could hardly see the graphics – then it almost worked. Five years later Compact Discs have arrived, household satellite TV launched and another 3-D space game released which, if you squint at it through special spex almost works at about 15 feet distance. So, unless you've a profound desire to be cross-eyed with head-splitting headaches the question is – what's the game like with the 3D off?

The scenario is that there's this evil tyrant Vadd who rules a star system of ten planets. The governments of these worlds would like to eradicate Vadd and have hired you to this. Naturally the solar system is jam packed with Vadd's ships.

In the centre of the system there's Vadd's sector. To enter it you must have a Mega Disrupter. You get one of these by collecting four normal Disrupter units of the highest value, and one variable Disrupter – obtained by flying through a black hole (a wireframe tunnel). Alternatively you can buy one by earning 8000 Megs by trading normal Disrupter units with the ten planets. For some reason the planets like to collect 'poker hands', and will pay higher than the face, Meg value of a Disrupter if it's one they need.



● *With a knapsack on my back*

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: fast vector graphics, but the 3-D effect doesn't really work
Sound: Catchy 128K title tune, sparse ingame effects
Options: normal or 3-D
General rating: the novel 3-D effect fails to inject any excitement into a dull space game

Megs can also be spent on replenishing shield and energy levels.

Unfortunately blasting alien after alien soon becomes dull, while trading is overly difficult. The vector graphics are fine, sound is pretty good, but with little variety in its gameplay, *Wanderer* soon causes your mind to wander onto more interesting games.

PHIL 56%

MIKE Initial bafflement at the apparent complexity of ***Wanderer*** **soon gives way to disappointment as the gameplay proves to be nothing special. The most difficult part is trading; the instructions are terrible, and there is no on-screen help whatsoever. The space section is quite enjoyable, but soon gets repetitive, as does the game itself I'm afraid.**

57%

Presentation	52%
Graphics	72%
Sound	70%
Playability	65%
Addictive qualities	50%

OVERALL 57%

BLASTEROIDS

Producer Imageworks
Precious rocks £9.99 cass
£14.99 disk
Author Teque



● *Haven't I seen this somewhere before?*

Help! I'm trapped in a time warp, doctor! Every time I load up my computer, games like *Break Out*, *Pac-Man* and now *Asteroids* appear.

Don't worry about it, there *is* a cure. Buy a review magazine like CRASH and carry it everywhere – this will warn you when you're about to purchase something which could give you severe déjà vu. Now, here's an example, just read this . . .

Blasteroids may be the very latest coin-op conversion, but is basically *Asteroids* with knobs on. In this case the knobs are a two player mode and a host of glitzy gimmicks, actual gameplay isn't too bad though.

When the game begins there's a choice of four different warps of varying difficulty. Warps contain several galaxies, each comprising nine or sixteen sectors. Each sector is predictably chock-a-block with asteroids, which must be cleared to go on to the next sector. Most asteroids split into smaller fragments as they're shot, others are indestructible but freeze when shot, and some asteroids even chase you. The most welcome asteroids are purple, as they contain energy pods to boost your power.

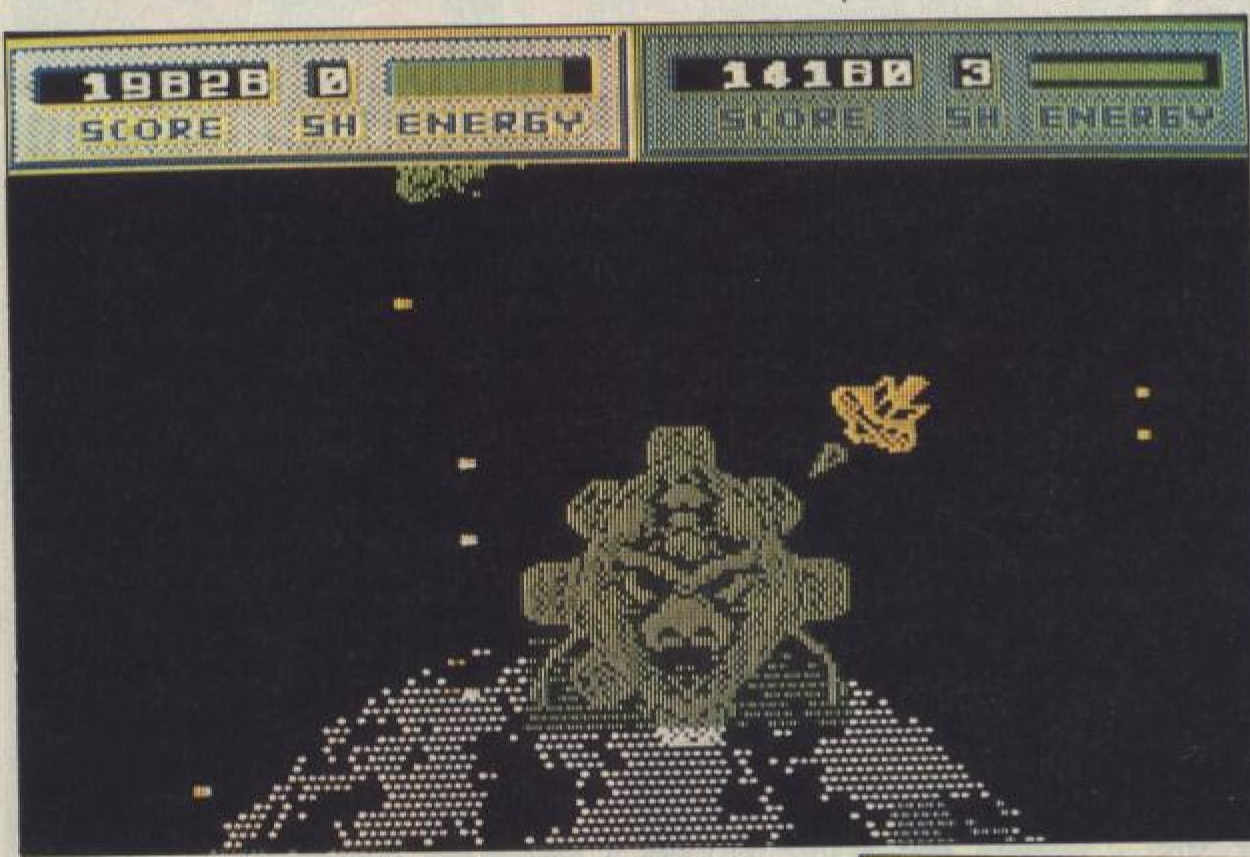
Also to be looked out for are the pods released by the destruction of alien ships. There are eight temporary add-ons including double shot Blasters, turbocharger Ripstars, energy pod attracting Crystal Magnets, extra fuel capacity and so on.

Permanent blasting power is provided by a very clever ship which can transform into the Speeder (fast), Fighter (heavily armed) and Warrior (best armour). And in two player both ships can be docked to form a supership, one person manning the gun turret while the other panics at the flight controls.

Once a sector is completed, an exit portal appears to transport you to the Galactic Map. You can enter any adjacent sector and when all the sectors have been cleared it's time to take on Mu kor, a giant green alien. Defeat him – by blasting away large wart-like (ugh!) growths on his sides – and its on to the next galaxy. On easy level there's just two galaxies, which are (surprise!) easily completed.

Once that easy level is completed are you going to be all fired up to *blasteroid* your way through the other three? Well, maybe – the old left/right rotate, forward for thrust, control system is still as awkward as ever, adding to playability, and graphics are generally good. The problem is that the Galaxy Map only gives a relatively shallow chance to plan strategy, and lacking any great depth you might not return to it that often. Nevertheless if you want a simple blast-'em-up, with awkward controls and lots and lots of asteroids, look no further.

MARK 72%



PHIL **Turbocharged asteroids! Yes, the old favourite makes a souped-up comeback. You'll be glad to know that its original rock-blasting playability has been retained. But the range of extra features adds even more fun. One player can start off playing solo, and then if a friend arrives he can join in – good idea. Then there are the many add-ons to collect for your ship as well as a variety of asteroids and enemy ships. But the most interesting feature is the ability to change ship-size. As each size has both advantages and disadvantages, simple strategy is added to the arcade action. Unfortunately, clearing sector after sector eventually gets repetitive. The inclusion of four skill levels marginally improves lastability, but ten quid is a lot to pay for a few hours of fun.**

73%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: well-defined ships, but plenty of colour clash
Sound: good 128K title tune, fair ingame blasting effects
Options: definable keys. Two player mode. Four warps of varying difficulty
General rating: great fun for a while, especially with two players

Presentation	68%
Graphics	65%
Sound	69%
Playability	76%
Addictive qualities	70%
OVERALL	**73%**


ULTIMATE
PLAY THE GAME
PRESENT
JETMAN
OUR HEAD-THE-BALL HERO IS STRANDED IN MING'S FLYING HIDE AWAY WITH A PAIR OF MURDEROUS ROBOTS, BUT HE DOSEN'T KNOW THEY'RE OUT TO SNUFF HIM... HE THINKS ITS SUMMELSE...
SOMEONE'S OUT TO OFF ME...!
GERRAWAY..
PSSST..! MEBBE HE'S DISGUISED AS A LAMPSHADE!
WOT!
EH?
WOT..?
IT'S THE LAMPSHADE...
PUTCHOW PUTCHOW
HEE-HEE-HEEE
WOO-HA-HAAAR
NOPE, T'WERENT IN THE LAMPSHADE...
I BET HE'S DISGUISED AS ONE OF THESE HERE CUSHIONS!
OF COURSE...
FADOOM
THE CUSHIONS!
HYUK-UK KUK-UK!
CLAP CLAP
BLAT
BLAT BLAT
MAY...(HAY.) MA.. MAYBE.. MAYBE ITS DISGUISED...(HEH) AS... YOUR EAR!
OF COURSE... MY EAR!
BLAM
WOH-HAAR-HAAR-HAAR-HE-HEEEE-HEEEEEE
HO..! I THINK WE IS BEEN RUMBLED!
SHOULD US SAY WE IS SORRY..?
NO USE... HE DEEF!
SHNAARRL
SLAVER
PORK CRACKIN'
I WILL THEREFORE USE THE INTER-GALACTICAL SIGN LANGUAGE TO GET US OUT OF THIS MESS...
FLIT
FLIT
FLIT
"DOSH"
DOSH!
HYUK-YUK-YUK
WOW! YOU SHORE GOT SOME CHIPS! YOU IS A REAL TANDY, YOU IS!
TA!
DOSH... DOSH...
DOSH..
HOH!
THERE YO IS, LOONY, MINGS TREASURE HOUSE...
AIEE
RIGHT..! I'LL LOCK THE DOOR ON 'IM...
...AN' I GO SET THE TIME BOMB!
DOSH!
VOT VAS DAT..? EIN BOMBEN? IS DER ROBOTTEN SCHWEIN GANGEN MACHEN DER KNOCKWURST OUTEN DAS LOONISH?.. IS GEM SNIFFING BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH..? YOU BET!

LM'S FORUM



My my, that M must be the biggest letter I've ever printed! Sorry for the terrible joke – it's a natural reaction to grandma, who quite startled me over tea and toast this morning by muttering 'if e'er it snow twixt Lent and May, then April's robins have nowt to say'. I don't know what provoked *that* . . .

You've got plenty to say, anyway, and this month's letters raise quite a lot of tricky points which I've done my best to answer; apologies, as always, to those who got cut or didn't get printed. I do hang on to letters month to month, so there's always a chance of them cropping up later.

And so to business – this month's £30 Letter Of The Month prize goes to a gentleman who knows that to give is better than to receive.

IT'S CRASH AID!

Dear Lloyd
I have bought every issue of CRASH since the first one back in February 1984 – they're all in excellent condition. I feel it would be nice to use this collection to try to raise a small sum, perhaps for those less fortunate than me and my fellow readers – what do you think?

Maybe you could raffle or auction the collection through your magazine and nominate a suitable charity or cause, to receive whatever is raised.

I hope you like the idea and that you can help - my collection is at your disposal, and I look forward to hearing from you.
Robin Harley, Shoreham by Sea

What a generous person you are, Robin! A complete set of CRASHes is surely worth at least £100, but my suggestion – which I'll shortly put to Ed Stuart – is that we raffle the collection, either through the magazine itself or at a show such as the Microfair or PC Show. In either case, CRASH would take care of all the organisation and publicity.

But I think since *you're* giving away the prize *you* should choose a charity, so please give me a ring or drop me a line, as they say.

In the meantime, in a devastating proof of the 'do as you would be done by' principle, YOU win this month's £30 software prize! You can take it as a prize, or add it to the money raised for charity – let me know.

And thank you again, on behalf of whoever ends up benefitting by your offer.

LM

OF SAM, SAMARA AND STAFF

Dear Lloyd
I read with great interest the article in the February issue of CRASH on the imminent arrival of the MGT SAM. I had decided to buy the SAM as soon as I read the first article early last year. And then it was only 128K RAM and two screen modes. And now? Well, let's just say that MGT will have, at least, my order for the machine.

However, the main point of my letter is to ask a few questions, some to do with the above-mentioned computer.

1 Will CRASH be following the progress of SAM and its software/hardware support? If so will it be a regular, dozen(ish) pages set aside, or will it be put on equal billing with the Spectrum (at least till it warrants its own magazine), or will it (horror of horrors) be relegated only to the pages of TGM?

I realise that it really depends upon the success of the machine, both initially and in the long run, so for the sake of argument, base your reply as if it was as successful as, say, the Amiga.

2 How much do you expect MGT will charge for SAM's disk units?

3 Why is it that the staff at CRASH keeps changing about? The constant swapping about does not help the consistency necessary to stay an excellent magazine. But it still is the best 8-bit mag about. There again, it is better than most 16-bit mags!!!

4 By now you will no doubt have received many a letter complaining about the Adventure Trail intro. Don't you think it was a little too far taken? Sure, it was different, but maybe a little more gentle style of approach is called for.

At this point I am going to cry because my pen has just thrown up all over the February issue of CRASH . . .

Be sure to have one of Phil King's sheep shot and sold to buy Dominic Handy a new font. The latest is too readable!

Lastly, and this has just come into my head, how about a 'Readers' Page' where readers can write in with messages and announcements, etc? 'No sales, no sex and no swearing' could be the rules. Even half a page . . .
Goodbye, good luck, and good sheep-shooting
Neil Rumbold, Oxfordshire

Ed Stuart (they do change quickly, don't they!) assures me that CRASH will cover software – and, presumably, peripherals – for SAM as they come out. He reckons that if the machine takes off there'll be a separate SAM section in CRASH, but obviously it's going to be some time before there's a rush of SAM-specific software.

As for the disk-drive question, I couldn't get through to *anybody* at MGT today! The last time I looked into the matter, however, the cassette-loading version was going to be sold for £149.95 and the disk-drive model for £220; in other words the 3.5-inch drive costs £70, which isn't a bad price in itself!

I imagine MGT will be prepared to upgrade SAMs from cassette to disk, and thanks for reminding us about the issue – CRASH should keep readers informed on this.

Your third question is a difficult one to answer, but I can always try . . . that's what I'm kept at the Towers for, after all!

Though it seems that staff constantly come and go from CRASH, many of them remain at Newsfield and so they're always available to put ideas (or even a spot of hard work!)



into the magazine. For instance, Roger 'Traitorous' Kean, the original Ed, is still chairman of the board of directors (or something along those lines – they're always changing titles to sound even more important) and keeps a close eye on CRASH.

Dom and Barnaby, two erstwhile Eds, are working on MOVIE and TGM respectively. In fact, Barnaby still pops into the office quite often to mock Nick Roberts by calling college 'school' (I'm told it's the best way to get on Nick's nerves – frustrated tipsters please note). And Kati is working on ZZAP! – it seems traitorousness (LMLWD) never dies.

But some things do. The editorial team offer apologies over that Adventure Trail intro. Perhaps we should have made it clear that, far from being the work of a blood-crazed imagination, it was an accurate report of the unfortunate end which Samara met.

And after much consideration we felt that, though the grim facts were likely to offend some readers, we had an obligation – nay, a immutable duty, a sacred trust handed down by all those who have carried the torch of truth and understanding through the ages – to say what was said, that generations yet unborn may learn from our mistakes and also, let it not be forgotten in these dark hours, from our triumphs.

Finally, and this is true, there is a Readers' Page of sorts – my Forum! And I don't believe in money, sex or swearing, so it's obvious that great minds think alike.

LM

TOP TEN SOFTWARE HOUSES

Dear Lloyd
Here are the average percentages for the best ten software producers last year:

	Producer	Average
1	Incentive	95% (only 1 game)
2=	Hewson	91%
	System 3	91%
4=	Digital Integration	89% (only 1 game)
	Rainbird	89%
6	CCS	88%
7	Topologika	84%
8	Domark	82%
9	Marlin Games	82%
10	ACE	81%

Ben Hales, Doncaster

PS Keep up the good work at CRASH!

Thank you, Ben – and now let me request a chart I'd *really* like to see! How about a list of the last year's top ten subjects for Forum letters? A mystery prize of a Spectrum game to the first entry received by me at the Towers!

LM

16-BORES?

Dear Lloyd
Now that the 16-bit market is off the ground I think it is about time we assessed the argument for and against these new machines. The market has now passed its *Horace Goes Skiing* stage with alarming rapidity, and enhanced versions of 'modern games' are appearing in the shops.

Games such as *Starglider 2*, *Elite*, *Ingrid's Back* and *Heroes Of The Lance* have made their debut on the Amiga and met with an acceptable reception from the consumer. And yet all the critics seem to say about the games are 'the graphics are great'.

While discussing the game *Elite* with an Acorn-using friend, the Amiga version wormed its way into the conversation.

My comment was 'too many pretty colours and little atmosphere due to these bright shades'.

His reply was 'yes, but have you seen the menus and information screens? Beautiful.'

Later on, my snobbish Amiga-owning ex-friend (who shall remain nameless) 'stole' my copy of CRASH and found great pleasure in sneering at the screenshots (I'll provide his address if you want to send someone round).

Personally, I don't care about the graphics of a game. I find great fun in playing games like *Barbarian I/II*, *Afterburner* and *Elite* without snazzy, pointless graphics on my trusty slow multiloading +2.

Keeping with the theme of long multiloads, I'm sick of the nameless snob boasting about his superfast disk drive. Some games, like *Heroes Of The Lance*, have megalong loading times and equally massive manuals. While the game is loading I usually read the manual and revise the game controls and other aspects of the game.

So here's a stake in the heart for all yuppie Amigas – long live the Spectrum!
D Lascelles, South Shields

Dear me. Why is it that people always feel the need to criticise other machines? First it was Spectrum vs C64, now it's 8-bits vs 16-bits, and you can be assured that in the rarefied atmosphere of TGM a bitter war rages over the relative merits of the ST and Amiga.

Surely it's all a bit irrelevant to real computing life. If you have a Spectrum, you have a Spectrum and the qualities or disadvantages of 16-bit machines should mean nothing to you – unless you're planning to buy one.

Having said all that, I've often felt it would be a fine thing if there were only *one* home computer in existence. All the quarrels would stop, and all the programmers currently busy on conversions could do new games!

LM

MISCELLANEOUS MUSINGS

Dear Lloyd
I thought I should raise one or two points about your usually very good mag.

Please bring back the cartoons in the Forum, they were BRILL, and also please bring back the Value For Money rating.



Finally, I'm fed up of those people writing in and making unnecessary changes, DO NOT PRINT THEIR LETTERS.

By the way, I have found that the inlay cards on most games are very, very unreliable. Take *Renegade* – you are not told how to do the moves, and a lot of games don't even tell you the PAUSE and QUIT keys.

Yours sincerely
Timothy Jeeves, Odell

PS You wear a bag on your head because you are so ugly, don't you? Everybody . . . Lloyd is ugly!

Ugliness is in the eye of the beholder – but your comments have been noted, as bank managers say.

LM

THE LAW AND PAW

Dear Lloyd
I am writing on the subject raised by Scott Mandy in Issue 61. For the past few months I have been writing an adventure with the *PAW* utility. The problem is that I am unsure if it is legal for me to include a copyright message in it.

I'm not sure if a fee or some such thing has to be paid to someone along with all the 'red tape'. One book I have read states:

> *In the UK, in order to qualify for protection under the Act, it is not necessary for a British subject to make any formal registration to bring his work within the protection of the Act.*

My older brother (who is extremely experienced in the field of large business computing) seems to disagree with that statement.

I would be most grateful if you could provide a brief explanation of the copyright law according to computer software.

I have also stumbled across the Personal Data Protection Law of 1984. What is this and what are its implications?

I would be grateful if you could explain it.
Philip Gleghorn, North Shields

I hate to say it, but your brother is wrong. Anything that is covered by copyright – eg books and musical works – is protected *as soon as it is written.*

However, there are still many uncertainties about the law as it applies to software, probably because there have been few major cases to explore the ins and outs of the relevant legislation, which is the Copyright (Computer Software) Amendment Act of 1985.

For instance, not even the major Copyright, Designs And Patents Bill introduced last year covers 'look and feel' in software – so you must prove that someone has ripped off actual code or algorithms from your program, rather than just stolen your ideas.

So, the answer to your question is no, you don't have to register. You don't even have to put a copyright mark on your program for protection within the UK, though it's necessary for some foreign countries.

Your brother may be confusing copyright with patents, which *do* require registration – if so, perhaps he's thinking of hardware rather than software, as programs are not patentable.

Finally, as you're writing with PAW, I suggest you look at its documentation to see if Gilsoft demand to be acknowledged on any program produced with the utility. Even if they don't, if you decide to put 'produced using PAW' on your packaging anywhere, you'd better find out whether PAW is a trademark – if so, you'll also have to say (in tiny letters!) 'PAW is a registered trademark of Gilsoft'.

Ah well, it all keeps lawyers in business. As for your final question, when you say 'Personal Data Protection Law' I presume you mean the 1984 Data Protection Act, which essentially means that you can't hold personal data on a computer without telling the person it's about.

I hope this clears up some muddy legal waters!

LM

'In my end is my beginning' – and just to surprise you, that's not one of grandma's sayings, but a riddle! I forget the answer (typically), but it might as well be 'Lloyd's Forum', because as soon as I've finished reading each month's letters and writing the replies another huge batch arrives.

Well, don't forget that there's £30 worth of software up for grabs for the best letter every month, so set quill to sheepskin and get writing to:

LLOYD MANGRAM'S FORUM
CRASH TOWERS
PO BOX 10
LUDLOW
SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB

And, as always, remember to put 'personal attention of Mr Mangram' on the envelope – I don't trust nosy-parker Nick with my letters . . .



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E & OE

Play The *REAL* Thing W

"Swipe me missus! It's true! *The Real Ghostbusters* first level and CRL's smasherooni *Sophistry*. And only 35p when a tape like this should have cost £9.20!!!! CRASH has done it again!!"

How do we do it eh? Another great CRASH cassette (hurrah!) and for the first time ever you get the best of both worlds with an exclusive sneak preview of Mediagnik . . . Mejageni . . . er, Medgeniac, um, Genmedia . . . Ahem, Activision's up 'n' coming (wayhey missus!) coin-op conversion of Data East's ghoulish *The Real Ghostbusters*!

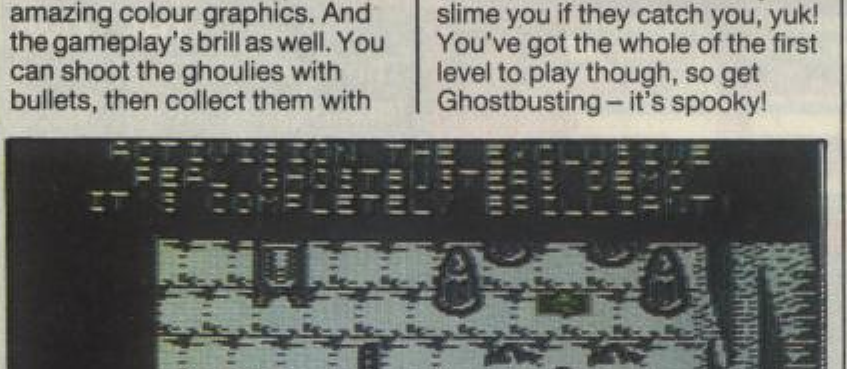
Yus! You've seen it on the telly, (And now on ITV telly it's time for *The Real Ghostbusters* – some swank bloke on the telly) you've played with the toys (Pah! Stupid toys . . . My go! No, my go! No! No! Mine! No, mine! Not! Is! etc . . .)

And soon you'll be playing *The Real Ghostbusters* on your Speccy! The miracles of modern science, eh readers? It's out incredibly soon and is a brilliant snip at £9.99 on cassette, and we've got the first level for you here! (Ear-shattering applause breaks out amongst all CRASH readers.)

Is that it? No by golly! Being so incredibly generous Clement 'Clem' Chambers, boss of CRL, has thrown in *Sophistry* – the swingorilliant puzzle game that 'rocked' the world by earning itself a CRASH Smash, amongst other awards, last May with a score of 90%. 'A highly addictive, ingeniously devised game with a brain' they cried back then! And who can blame them either? Not us 'cause it's brill! (CRASH readers' applause now breaks all boundaries and the planet Venus spontaneously combusts out of sympathy.)

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS

Wow! Put your shades on or you'll be dazzled by those amazing colour graphics. And the gameplay's brill as well. You can shoot the ghoulies with bullets, then collect them with your mega-powerful proton gun (oo-er). But watch out! They'll slime you if they catch you, yuk! You've got the whole of the first level to play though, so get Ghostbusting – it's spooky!







With CRASH!

SOPHISTRY

Puzzle game ahoy!! Give your brains a run for their money with this dead brill arcade puzzle game! *Sophistry* has 21 levels; each level is a series of interconnected 3-D game boards consisting of marked blocks. The objective is to go through all 21 levels, opening the structure level by level. At the start, 20% is opened – you've to get it 100% opened.

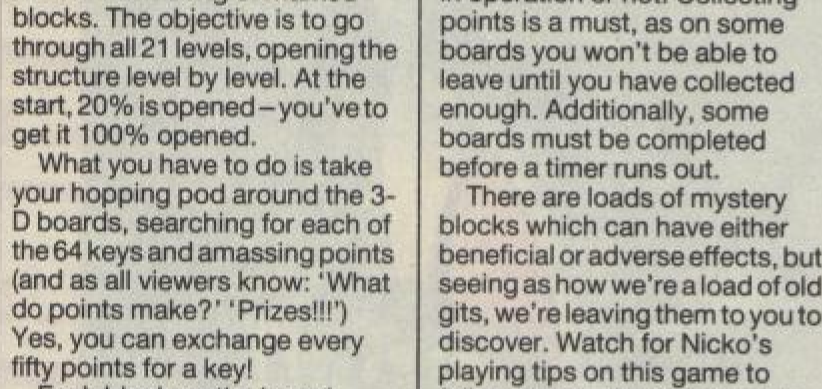
What you have to do is take your hopping pod around the 3-D boards, searching for each of the 64 keys and amassing points (and as all viewers know: 'What do points make?' 'Prizes!!!') Yes, you can exchange every fifty points for a key!

Each block on the board, which the pod can hop to in any of the four compass directions, have different qualities. Some bump up your points, some disappear – though if you miss a point or fall off a board then, badoooing!, you can say cheerio to one of your five lives.

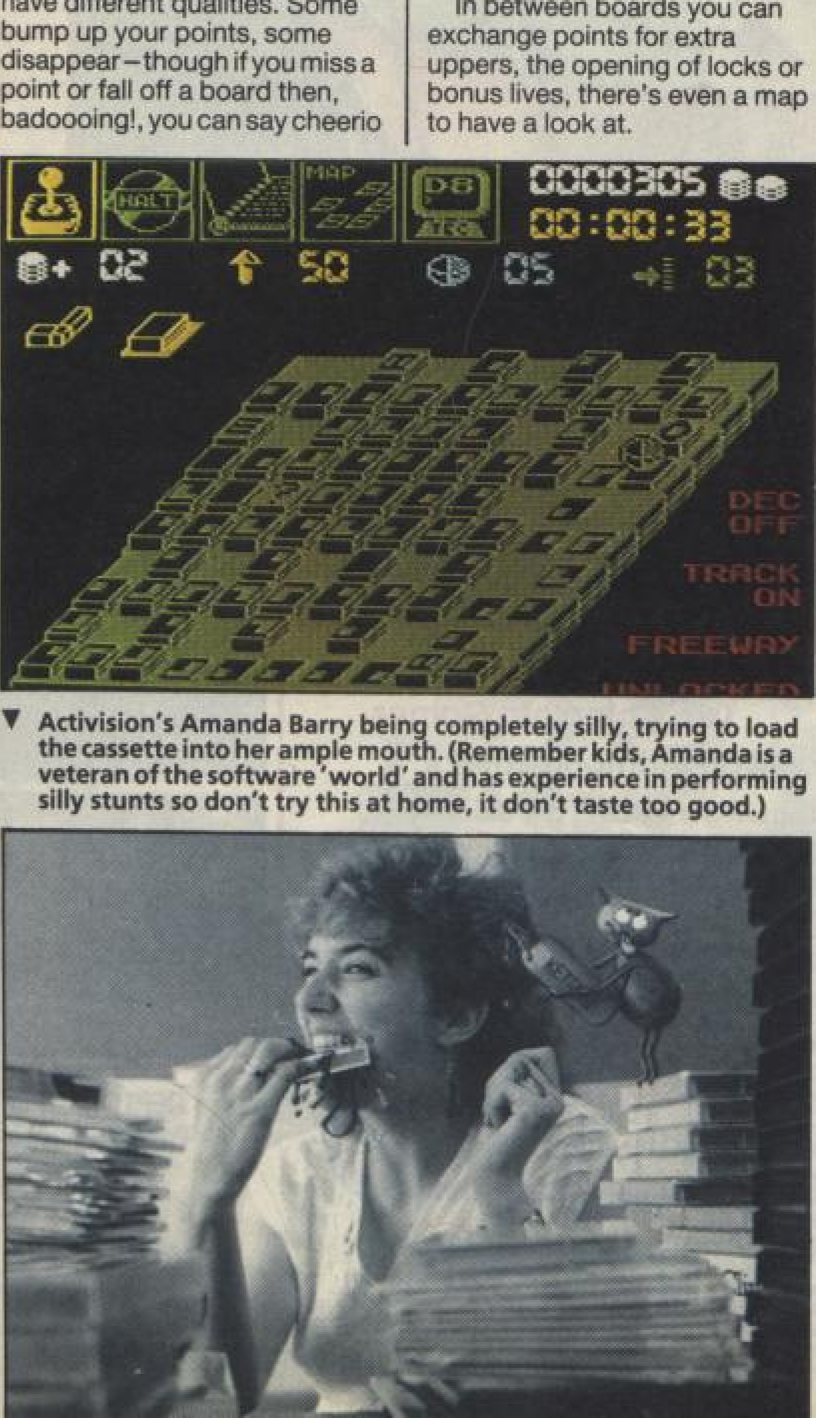
The basic concept of search and find is complicated by the properties of each block. The status panel on the left indicates whether certain restrictions are in operation or not. Collecting points is a must, as on some boards you won't be able to leave until you have collected enough. Additionally, some boards must be completed before a timer runs out.

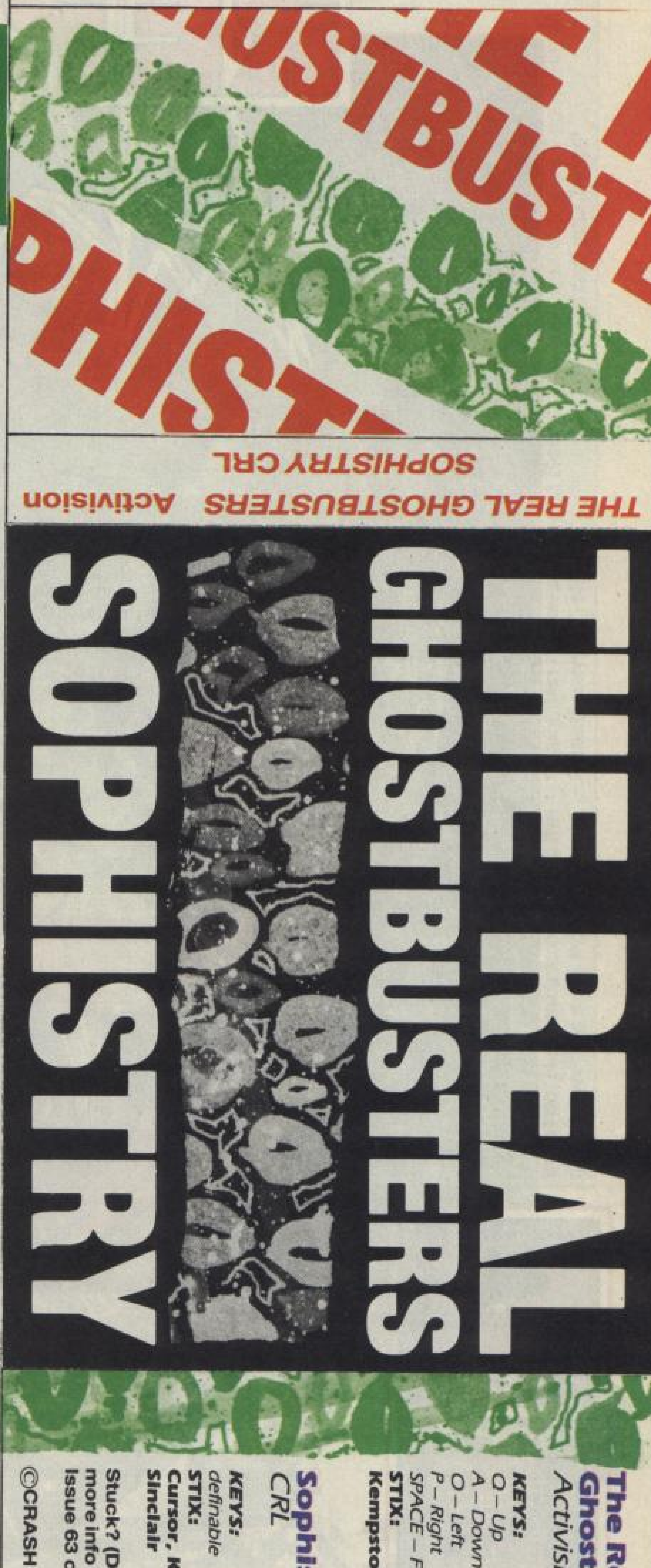
There are loads of mystery blocks which can have either beneficial or adverse effects, but seeing as how we're a load of old gits, we're leaving them to you to discover. Watch for Nicko's playing tips on this game to follow shortly (if you have any tips send 'em to the normal address).

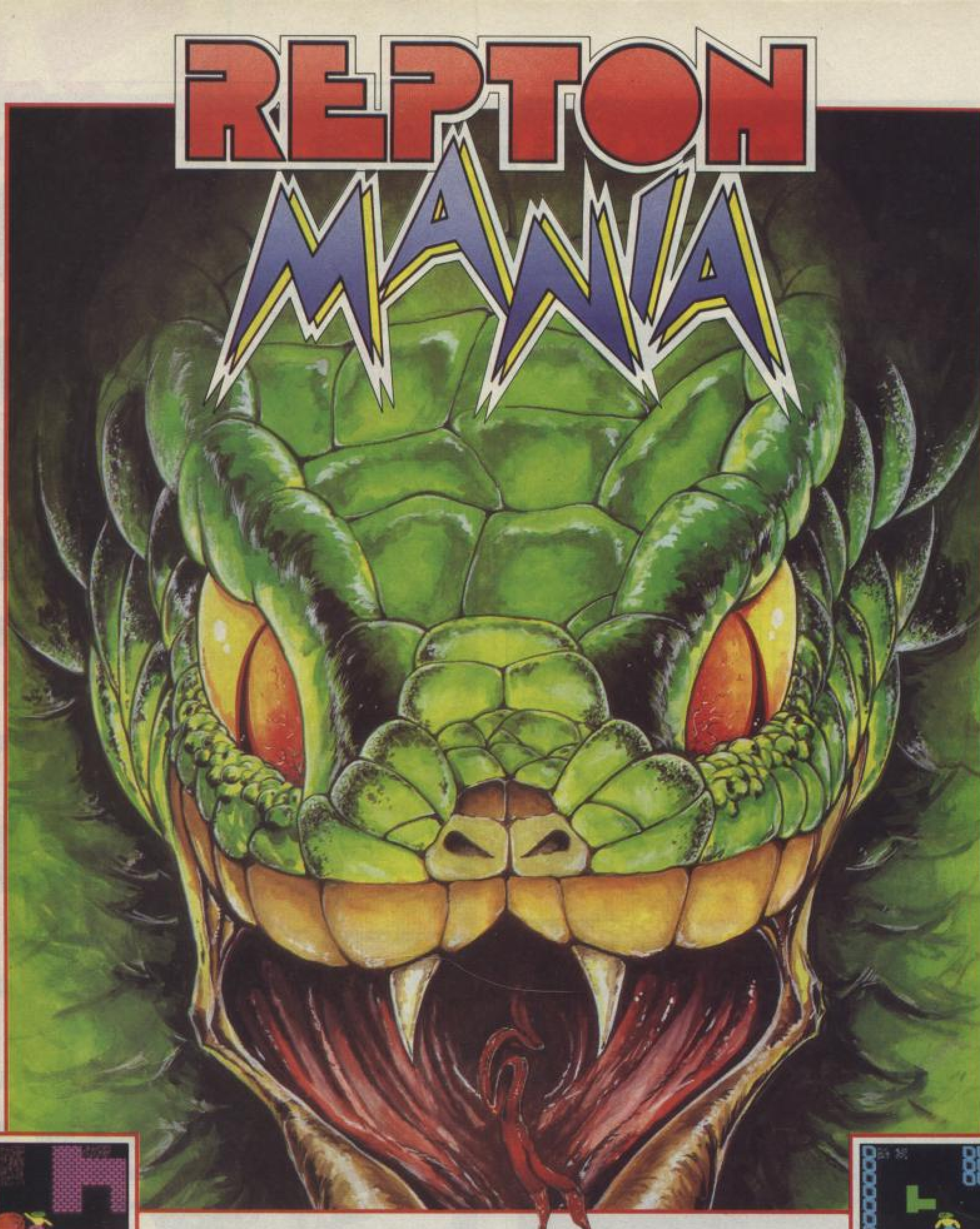
In between boards you can exchange points for extra uppers, the opening of locks or bonus lives, there's even a map to have a look at.



▼ **Activision's Amanda Barry being completely silly, trying to load the cassette into her ample mouth. (Remember kids, Amanda is a veteran of the software 'world' and has experience in performing silly stunts so don't try this at home, it don't taste too good.)**









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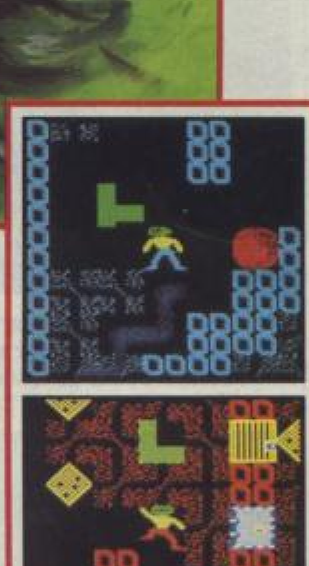
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GET SPOOKY WITH THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS

AND WIN A DAY OUT IN COIN-OP LAND!!



Hi, my name is Pete Venkman! In my capacity as leader of a rather screwy paranormal investigation team, I am here to inform you about the new game from **Activision**, titled ***The Real Ghostbusters***. For those of you unfamiliar with our activities, here's a run down on the story so far.

It all started when myself, Ray Stantz, Egon Spengler, and new boy Winston Zeddmore, investigated poltergeist infestations in a refrigerator. There followed a battle with the demon Zuul, but The Real Ghostbusters saved the day, and we even ended up with a new pet ghost. His name is Slimer, and he eats even more than I do. Now we travel around the city answering calls from anyone who needs our expert help. Be it spooks in the shower or ghouls in the garbage bins, we're on call 24 hours a day.

That's our story, but what can you win in this great competition? Well, those generous folks at Activision are offering some groovy goodies. The first-prize winner (and a friend) will be spirited away (groan) for a VIP, all expenses-paid day out at Brent Leisure. There, they will sample all that is new in the land of the coin-op and be presented with a *Real Ghostbusters* T-shirt and mug. Ten second-prize winners out of the ghost trap will each receive a *Real Ghostbusters* T-shirt and mug. And finally, ten runners-up get a Real Ghostbusters T-shirt.

To enter, just answer these three simple questions:

1 Which city do The Real Ghostbusters work in?

2 Whose refrigerator was infested in the movie?

3 Which member of the team collects spores and fungi?

Pop your answers on the back of an envelope and post it to **'HE SLIMED ME COMP', CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.** All entries must be in by 30th April, and no cheating or we'll send Slimer round to raid your fridge!

ARCADES

Olympia recently hummed to the sound of bells, sirens and heavy metal, as the 45th Amusement Trades Exhibition International turned the venue into one huge amusement arcade for four short days in January (16-19). Exhibits ranged from the latest line in drinks machines to the many new coin-gobbling fruit machines.

But of most interest to us were the new coin-ops on show. Many of the big names such as Sega, Atari and Taito, were showing off their latest arcade machines. So CRASH sent roving reporter, MARK 'the Coin-op Kid' CASWELL, down to the bright lights of London to give them the ultimate test. Take it away Mark . . .

Ah, the joys of being a CRASH reviewer – all the latest arcade machines, 90% free play and trade only – no screaming kids. The entrance fee was a bit stiff, £20, but us press hacks have our ways around such things and a visit to the press office resulted in the magic press badge and free entry into coin-op heaven. All those arcade machines and no-one playing them – or so I thought. Once inside I found the machines lost in masses of frantic gamesplayers – had the public stormed Olympia? No, it really was trade-only and all the gamesplayers were in pinstripes! All the joystick hammering was purely for research purposes, I was assured by an elderly gentleman smashing the high score on *Superman*! It didn't sound like a scientific conference though – my ears are still recovering from the deafening racket of fruit machines and CD jukeboxes belting out Iron Maiden tracks.

After wading through a sea of suits, I eventually managed to reach the elusive new coin-ops which made it all seem worthwhile. In this, the first of a two-part report, I'll be telling you about the ones that particularly caught my eye.

SUPERMAN
Taito

No, I'm not going to resort to the old 'Is it a bird?' etc introduction for the arrival of one of the archetypal super heroes from the DC Comics stable: all I'm going to say is heeeere's Clark. It's a nice sunny day in the city of Metropolis, and Clark Kent the mild mannered reporter is out enjoying it.

Superman is a five level romp through four cities in the US and a final battle in the Emperor's spaceship. Each level is split into three sections. The first of these sees Krypton's favourite son (or sons in two player mode) stalking the streets of New York in a horizontal bash-'em-up where the baddies are queuing to knock the stuffing out of him. Superman isn't exactly defenceless though, his punch would topple a skyscraper. In addition he has heat vision, sonic blast, and the ability to lift and throw certain objects. Three power boosting items can also be collected: blue rectangles add much needed energy, yellow rectangles bestow one sonic blast, and red rectangles act as a type of smart bomb, destroying all aliens on screen.

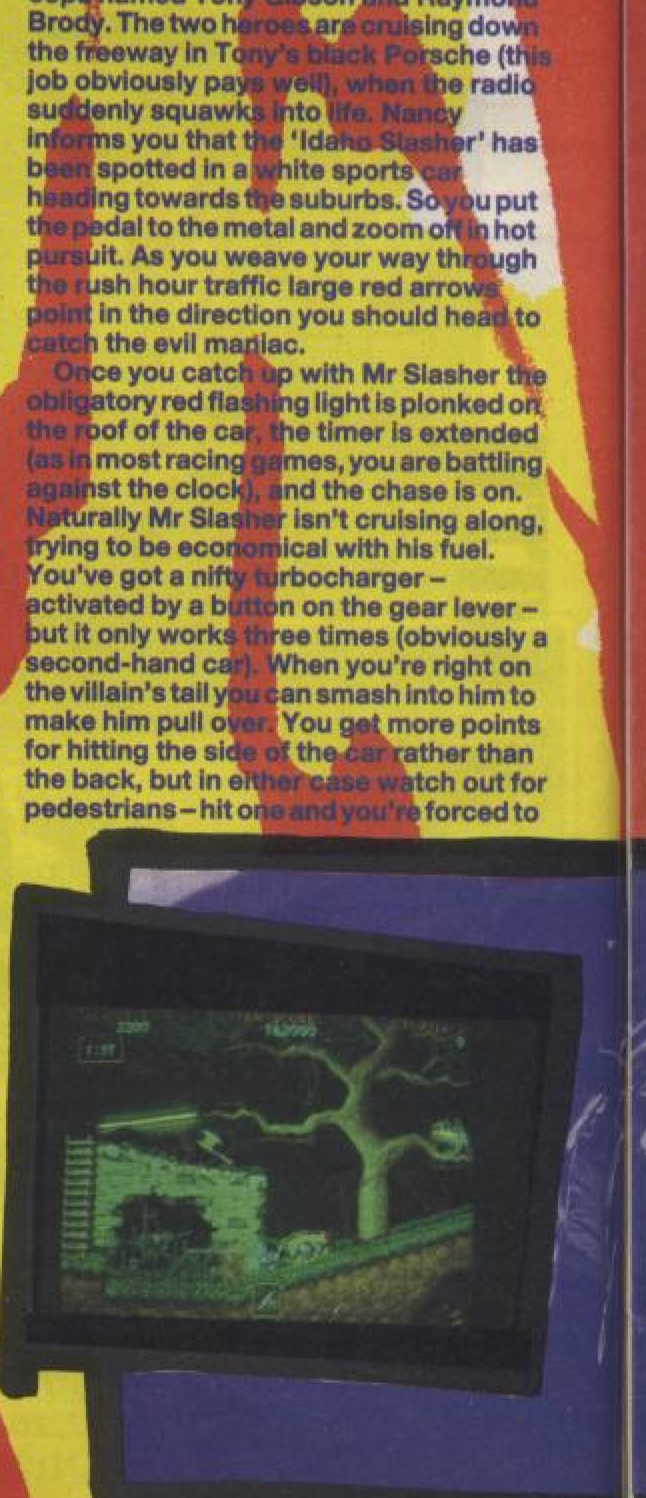
After an end-of-level guardian has been beaten, the second section gets under way. This is simply a vertically-scrolling version of the first sector and should cause as little trouble. Another guardian-biffing session then takes place before the third section can be tackled. Here, Superman has to use his famous heat vision to clear a path through a shower of boulders and then defeat yet another guardian (don't these guys ever give up?).

This sequence of play continues throughout the rest of the cities until 'the man of steel' reaches the spaceship belonging to Emperor Zass.

CHASE HQ
Taito

'This is Nancy at Chase HQ, we've got an emergency here'. So begins *Chase HQ*, the latest racing game from Taito. The place is New York City, the time now, and the heroes: two plain clothed cops named Tony Gibson and Raymond Brody. The two heroes are cruising down the freeway in Tony's black Porsche (this job obviously pays well), when the radio suddenly squawks into life. Nancy informs you that the 'Idaho Slasher' has been spotted in a white sports car heading towards the suburbs. So you put the pedal to the metal and zoom off in hot pursuit. As you weave your way through the rush hour traffic large red arrows point in the direction you should head to catch the evil maniac.

Once you catch up with Mr Slasher the obligatory red flashing light is plonked on the roof of the car, the timer is extended (as in most racing games, you are battling against the clock), and the chase is on. Naturally Mr Slasher isn't cruising along, trying to be economical with his fuel. You've got a nifty turbocharger – activated by a button on the gear lever – but it only works three times (obviously a second-hand car). When you're right on the villain's tail you can smash into him to make him pull over. You get more points for hitting the side of the car rather than the back, but in either case watch out for pedestrians – hit one and you're forced to



ROBOCOP
Data East

'Lay down your weapon, you have twenty seconds to comply' rumbles the bulky figure of ED 209 in Data East's arcade version of the popular film. As you will all no doubt be aware by now, the story concerns a dead police officer named Murphy, raised from the grave as RoboCop, and looking for revenge on his killers. The game begins in the streets of Detroit with the armoured hero stalking hordes of gun, chainsaw, and hand grenade-wielding baddies.

In this first section, all Robocop has for protection are his fists, so any dangerous projectiles sent his way must be ducked. Carefully timed punches can destroy homicidal motorcyclists and if you get to the end of the first street you get the use of your rapid-fire gun. No chance to get cocky though, not when the massive ED 209 lumbers on with gatling-gun fists. Duck the bullets and pop-up to blast back. After that it's on to the drugs factory, scrapyard and OCP Tower. Later versions of ED 209 even have lasers! Throughout the game music and sound FX are amazing, being sampled directly from the film. Graphics are first class as well, but gameplay lacks something by comparison with the Speccy version. The hostage and identikit sections are missing, replaced by a mediocre shooting gallery section. Then there's the fact that you've only life, and huge amounts of energy are drained by just a few hits.

If you fancy a really tough challenge with superb presentation *RoboCop* is the business, but for sheer playability the Ocean Spectrum version is the one you want.



slow down.

On the left-hand side of the screen is a damage meter; every successful hit on the target car increases this. When the car is deemed inoperable, you can zip in front and arrest the dude. There are five levels with an equal number of villains to catch. The first is fairly easy but by the time you reach the final level you're not even informed of the target vehicle's ID!

For those of you with destructive tendencies, *Chase HQ* is a great game. I particularly like the flying bodies which appear when the villain's car is rammed. This is the ultimate arcade version of cops-and-robbers movies, and I can't wait for the Ocean conversion.



GHOSTS 'N' GHOULS
Capcom

In days of old when Knights were bold and many a Princess needed rescuing from wicked dragons, a king lived. Arthur was his name and nasty monster bashing was his game. Arthur's last outing was in *Ghosts 'N' Goblins*, where he rescued his true love from the forces of Evil. Three years later and Arthur has still to make an 'honest woman' out of his beloved and while out on a jaunt round his kingdom the princess has been snatched again. (Obviously more of a Princess Caroline of Monaco than a Fergie.) So once again Arthur has to rescue the kingdom's most beautiful damsel.



As with the original game Arthur isn't too choosy about his weapons, and if he finds any lying on his path he'll use them. Especially useful is the golden Magic Armour, once suited up in this Arthur can obtain superpowers – like throwing fireballs and making mighty leaps – by holding fire down. And boy does he need all of the help he can get: the monstrous minions are after his blood in a big way. Zombies rise from the ground and chase him, large flocks of vultures swoop down onto his unsuspecting head and plenty more besides.

As in the original game, contact with the meanies first robs Arthur of his armour, and then one of his lives. The game is fun to play, but despite the addition of extra weapons and magical ability, gameplay differs little from the original.

HARD DRIVIN'
Atari

Two preproduction sit-down versions of this game were on show at the ATEI. But unfortunately *Hard Drivin'* won't be appearing in your local arcade for a while. Which is a shame, as this is the most advanced racing game that I've seen. Until now the likes of *Out Run*, *WEC Le Mans*, and the recent Sega hit *Power Drift* have been controlled with a simple high/low gear shift, a steering wheel and an accelerator. But in *Hard Drivin'* you are presented with an ignition key, steering wheel, accelerator, brake, plus a four-speed gear box and clutch (although an automatic transmission mode has thoughtfully been included for people who can't drive).

Another feature setting *Hard Drivin'* apart from the pack is the actual screen display. Rather than using unrealistic 'layered' graphics, this game uses flight sim-type 3-D graphics. They lack a little in graphic detail, but the sense of perspective and reality is excellent. Atari's intention is obviously that this be the ultimate driving simulator/arcade game and it was certainly the hottest thing at the show, permanently engulfed in crowds. Yet, amazingly, it was only a prototype. I'll certainly be looking out for the finished product, and I'll bring you a full review and screenshots as soon as it's released.

PHILIPPE ULRICH / DIDIER BOUCHON

CAPTAIN BLOOD

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Nick Roberts's

PLAYING TIPS



Hello, and welcome to page 31 of CRASH, the magazine with large quantities of Mark Caswell. Oi! wait a minute, have you been messing with my disk again Mark? Hi, this is Nick 'O' Roberts speaking. You have just tuned in to the best Playing Tips section for miles. This is the part of CRASH that makes you so excited you feel like taking off your socks, filling them with rum and raisin ice cream, and serving them up with just a little sprig of mint (optional). Or alternatively you can just settle back in an arm chair and read how to improve your skills on all the latest games. As you will have heard if you listened to last month's hotline, I have got maps of *RoboCop* and *Foxx Fights Back* for you this month. POKEs are a bit short in supply so there are just hacks for *Rex* part one and two, and the £40 of software is for the hard work that Neil Campbell **has put into cracking the part two code in the same game. So put your socks back on (after scraping out the raisins) and commence reading.**

REX VEXED

As you will probably have noticed if you got the Martech game *Rex* at Christmas, the POKE in the Christmas issue didn't work. There was no way of testing it as we only had the game on disk. Toby Benn **of London noticed the faulty POKE so decided to write his own, and here they are. Run these listings, start the *Rex* tape from the beginning and stop it when the loading screen has come up. You will then be asked three questions. Answer these and start the tape again. And these are guaranteed to work! If you need help on the part two code then look at the code cracking piece.**

REX (PART 1)

```
10  REM REX PART 1 POKE
20  REM BY TOBY BEN
30  REM CRASH APRIL 89
40  POKE 23658,8: LET
    A=0: LET B=0: LET C=0
50  PAPER 0: INK 0:
    BORDER 0
60  CLEAR 24599
70  LOAD ""SCREEN$
80  INK 7
90  PRINT AT 16,0;"INF
    LIVES?": GOSUB 180: IF
    A$="Y" THEN LET A=1
100 PRINT AT
    16,4;"BOMBS?":
    GOSUB 180: IF A$="Y"
    THEN LET B=1
110 PRINT AT
    16,4;"SHIELDS?":
    GOSUB 180: IF A$="Y"
    THEN LET C=1
120 INK 0: PRINT AT
    16,0;"LOADING. . . . .":
    PRINT AT 0,0;
130 LOAD ""CODE
140 IF A=1 THEN POKE
    40057,0
150 IF B=1 THEN POKE
    38745,0
160 IF C=1 THEN POKE
    39396,0
170 RANDOMIZE USR
    38010
180 LET A$=INKEY$: IF
    A$<>"Y" AND
    A$<>"N" THEN GOTO
    180
190 IF INKEY$<>"" THEN
    GOTO 190
200 RETURN
```

REX (PART 2)

```
10  REM REX PART 2 POKE
20  REM BY TOBY BEN
30  REM CRASH APRIL 89
40  POKE 23658,8: LET
    A=0: LET B=0: LET C=0
50  PAPER 0: INK 0:
    BORDER 0
60  CLEAR 24599
70  LOAD ""SCREEN$
80  INK 7
90  PRINT AT 16,0;"INF
    LIVES?": GOSUB 180: IF
    A$="Y" THEN LET A=1
100 PRINT AT
    16,4;"BOMBS?":
    GOSUB 180: IF A$="Y"
    THEN LET B=1
110 PRINT AT
    16,4;"SHIELDS?":
    GOSUB 180: IF A$="Y"
    THEN LET C=1
120 INK 0: PRINT AT
    16,0;"LOADING. . . . .":
    PRINT AT 0,0;
130 LOAD ""CODE
140 IF A=1 THEN POKE
    40303,0
150 IF B=1 THEN POKE
    38721,0
160 IF C=1 THEN POKE
    39170,0
170 RANDOMIZE USR
    38000
180 LET A$=INKEY$: IF
    A$<>"Y" AND
    A$<>"N" THEN GOTO
    180
190 IF INKEY$<>"" THEN
    GOTO 190
200 RETURN
```

REX CODE CRACKING

Anyone who has played Martech's great game *Rex* will know doubt be befuddled by the sixteen figure code in the game and all the different combinations of numbers that it can have. Well befuddle no more because a bright spark by the name of Neil Campbell **has worked out what it all means. This piece of brain work has earned him £40 of software.**

The sixteen figure code consists of thirteen numbers for game attributes and three for the cheat protection code. The uses for each number are listed below with the first number lettered A and the last P.

A 1st figure of weapon energy (must always be 8)
B 2nd figure of score
C 3rd figure of weapon energy (must always be 8)
D Lives (maximum 9)
E 2nd figure of weapon energy (must always be 8)
F 3rd figure of score
G Weapons collected (8 gives all weapons)
H 5th figure of score
I 2nd figure of shield
J 4th figure of score
K Smart bombs (maximum 3)
L 1st figure of shield
M 1st figure of score
N 3rd figure of protection code
O 1st figure of protection code
P 2nd figure of protection code

Each of the first thirteen are found by subtracting the required number from 9 (e.g. if you wanted a score of 2222200 the numbers marked B, F, H, J and M would all be 7s). This rule applies to all the other attributes (so 9 lives would make D a 0 and 3 smart bombs would make K a 6). (This is a bit like being back in a maths lesson - Ed).

The weapon energy figures must always be 8s because weapon energy is automatically put to this number. Full single and double fire and 1 charge in the laser make the total charges 11 (the last number is for fractions – they are all there to confuse a code breaker!).

Once the scores, lives, smart bombs, etc have been decided upon and each number subtracted from nine, the three figure pass number can be calculated. This is done by adding the first 13 numbers then putting the resulting numbers in the right order. A sample code is given below with the first 13 numbers adding up to 82 (the figure can be over 100), so the 8 and the 2 are the second and third numbers making the code 028.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP
8980898909608208

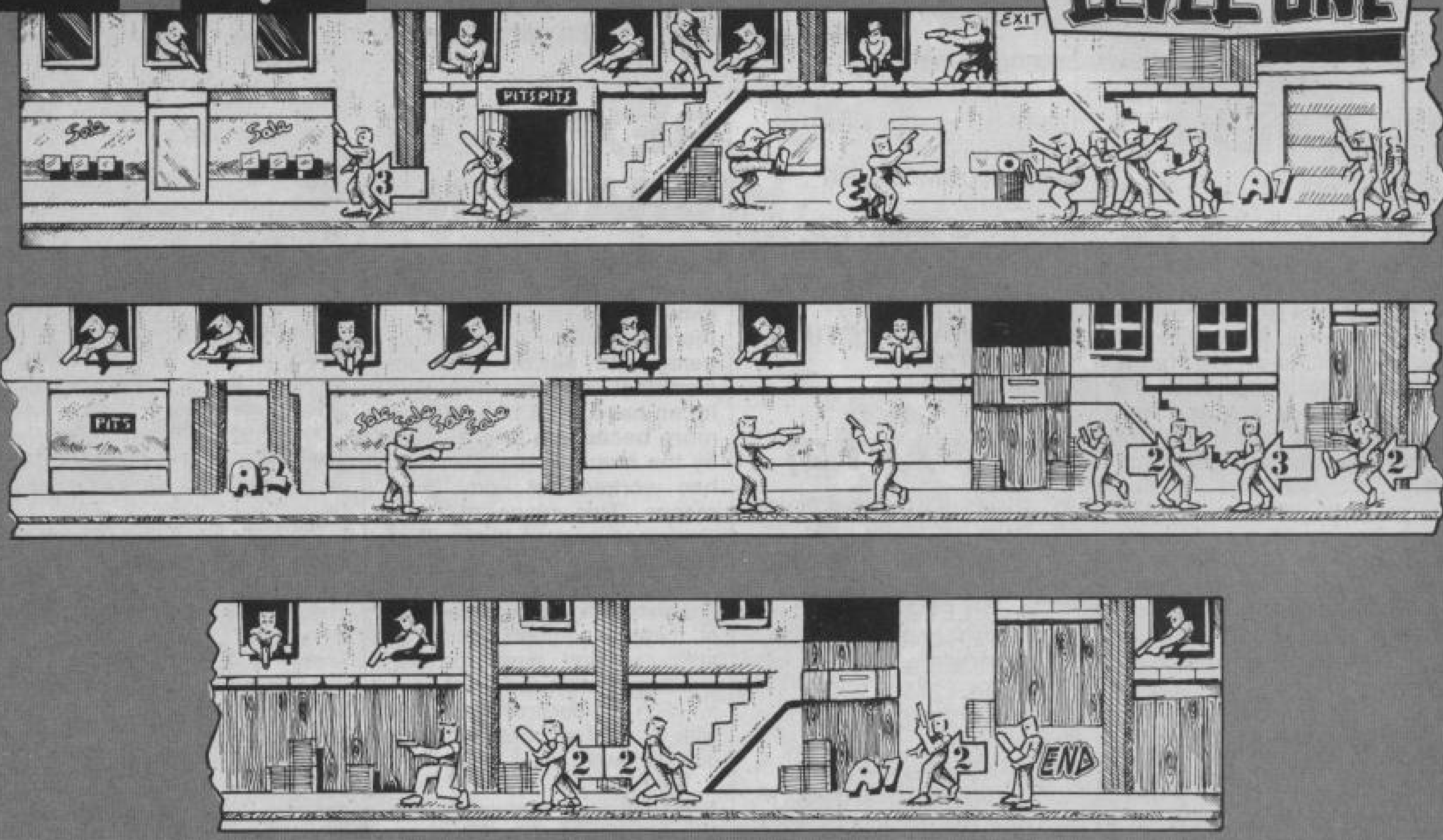
The above code will give 9 lives, 3 smart bombs, a full shield, all five weapons, a score of 1000000 and half weapon energy (nothing's perfect!).

I hope you understand all that, it gets quite confusing in some places but I assure you it works.

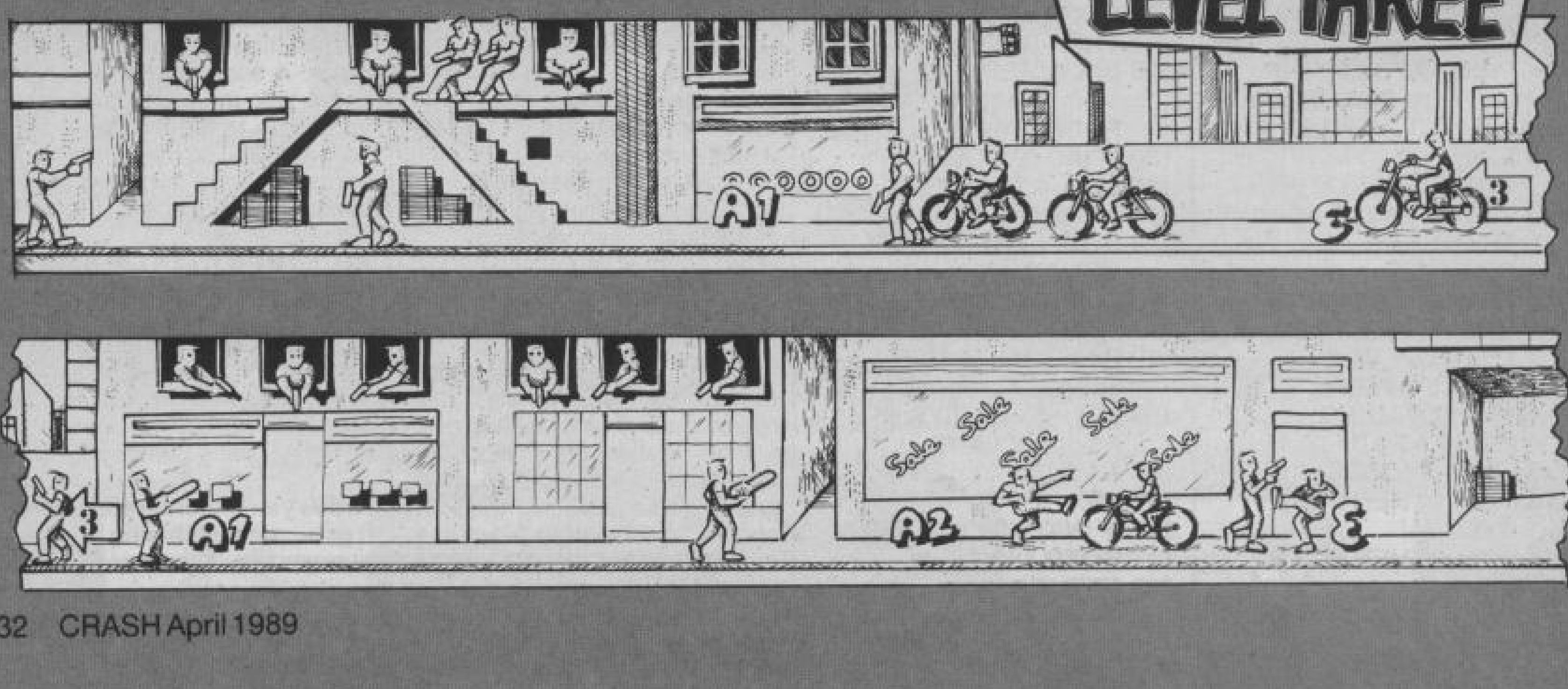
PLAYING TIPS

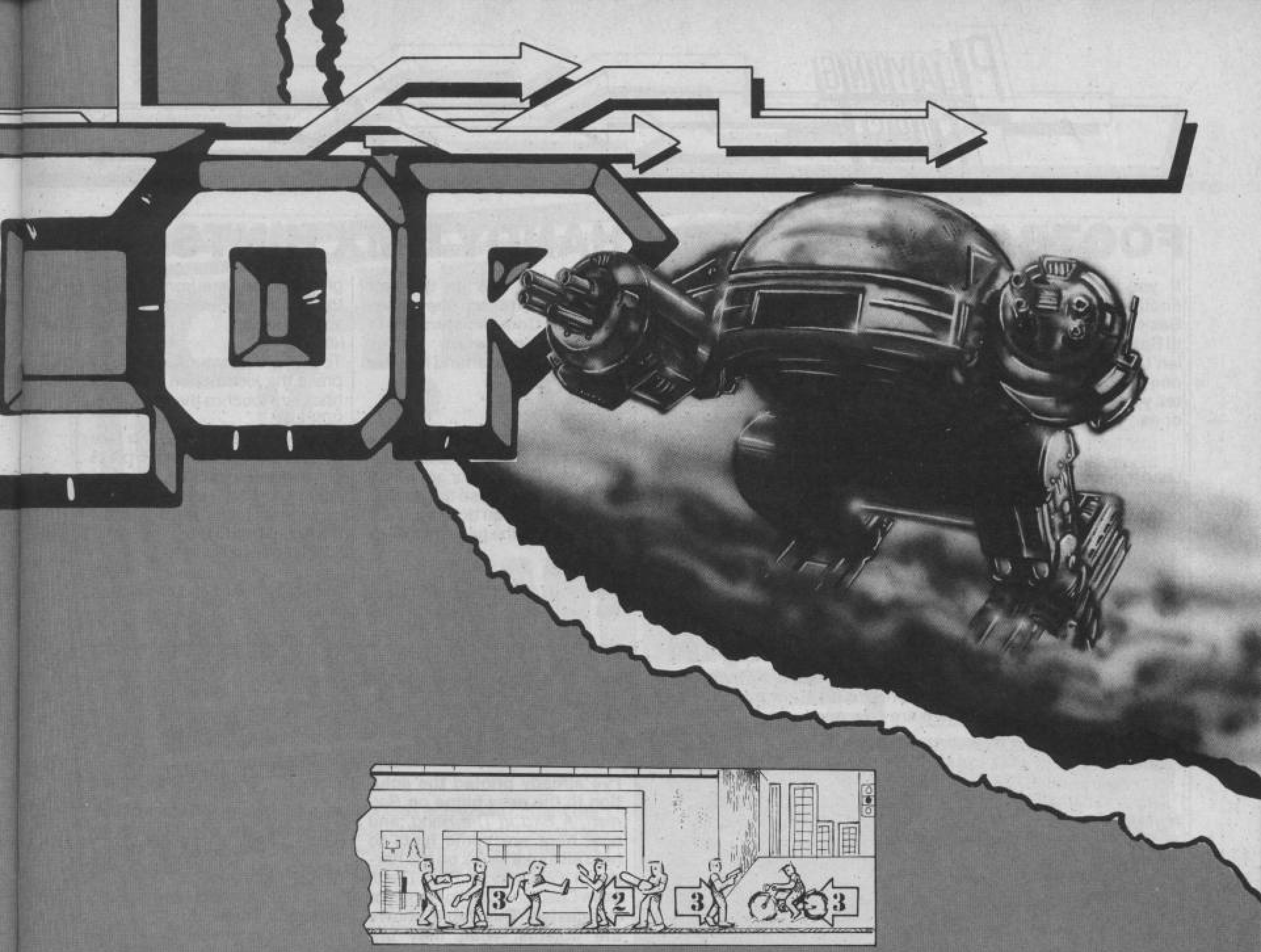
ROBO

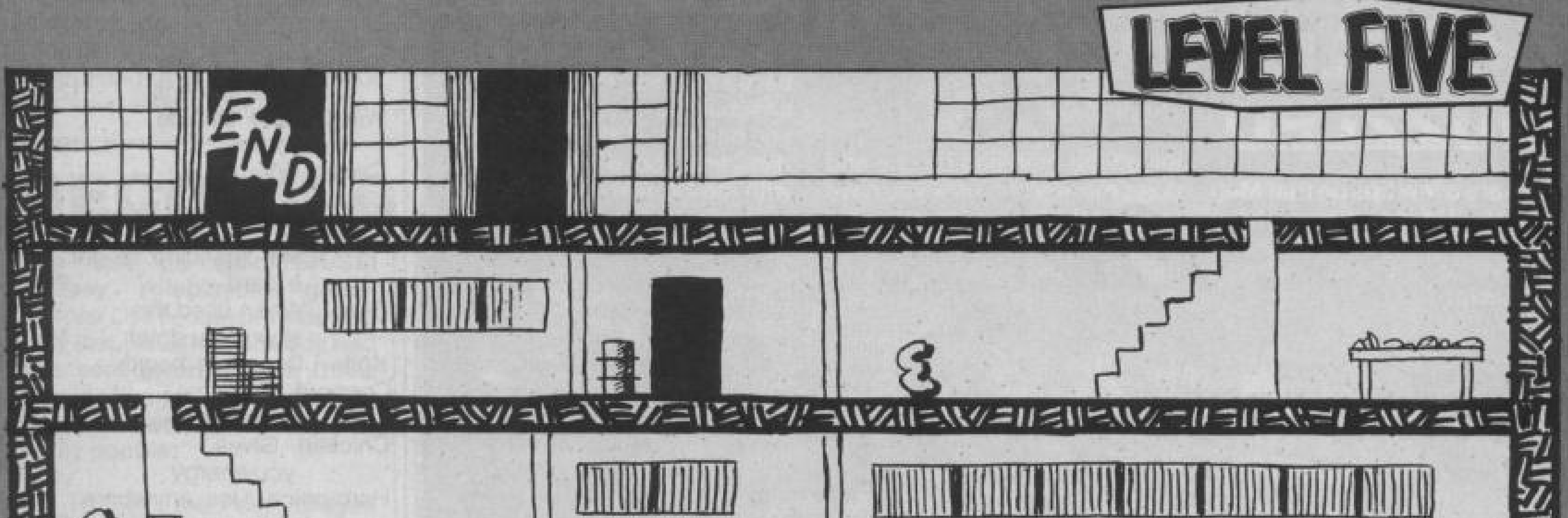
LEVEL ONE



LEVEL THREE






LEVEL FIVE
END
A3
A2
A1
S

FOOTBALL CRAZY

If you didn't already know, *Football Manager* **is written in Basic and you can break in to it! But just being able to do that isn't enough, you need someone like** Nick **and** Les Moon **to tell you exactly what each line does.**

Load the game as usual until you get the main menu. Type '99' to continue and immediately press BREAK. Then type 'GOTO' and any of these numbers to go straight to that option.

Line	Function
4000	New matches and F.A. Cup matches
4322	Gate reciepts
4610	To change gate reciepts
5210	You've won the F.A. Cup!
8130	End of season bonus
8220	League success bonus (you must be top of the league)
8250	New season
8700	Transfers★

★You can have up to 24 players. After selecting a player type: 'GOTO 100' then BREAK and 'GOTO 8700'.

THE MULTIFACE MAN

Alias Multifacing Mark Davies **who has got a load of new multiface POKEs for you to try out. I'm not sure if I have printed a few before but the the bulk of them are new ones.**

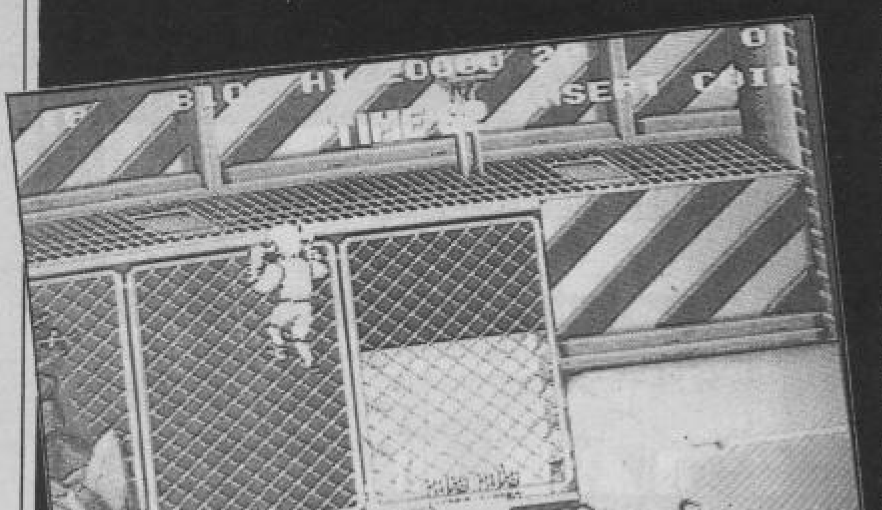
Typhoon *Stops End Of Level Ship Firing* 39143,0
Skate Crazy *Time* 46473,201
No Fatigue 46409,201
Lives 42646,126
Mask 3 *Lives* 46045,58+47778,179+49872,208+ 45589,201
19 Part One – Boot Camp *Time* 38048,58
Artic Fox *Lives* 50242,0+49396,0
Virus *Lives* 44945,0+37835,0
Last Ninja 2 *Lives* 40777,0
Samurai Warrior *Lives* 23826,0+33013,0
Skateboard Kidz *Lives* 25723,0
Soldier Of Fortune *Lives* 23314,0+46691,0
Dark Side *Shield* 45482,0+47924,0+45436,0

DOUBLE DRAGON MUZZLED

Here are a few tips on that Melbourne House game from issue 61, *Double Dragon.* **Thanks to** Christos Georgian **for this lot.**

Missions 1-4

Kill off the men one by one and don't move along until you have finished them all. Also when the fat man comes with the other men, kill the small men first. When the lady comes out, don't move on until you make sure you have killed her. Then pick up her baseball bat. If you don't kill her you have to kill all the other baddies, and you will be lumbered with the fat men too.



Missions 2-3B

Kill the men on the first platform before rushing off to the other levels. On 3A and 3B try not to go on the bridge as you'll be unable to defeat the enemies. If you stay on the one side you can push them all into the river.

Mission 5A

Wait safely next to the bricks which come out of the wall. As soon as the brick in front of you goes, rush to the other side of the screen without stopping.

Mission 5B

The last level. Do not be put off by the beast which tries to poke you with daggers, and don't walk too near the edge. The last three men are deadly, just battle it out and do not let them get the better of you.

HANDY BMX HINTS

Whether it's tips on the half pipe or hints on the ramp jumps of Code Masters' *BMX Freestyle* **you want,** Robert Jackson **of Sunderland has the lot.**

WHEELIE TRIALS
Keep your front wheel pointing straight up in the air and when you come to stones or oil let it go down a little as these tip the bike backwards. If you don't, you will fall off before the game has even begun!

RAMP JUMPS
When you take off from the ramp and are about to land on the ground keep your front wheel in the air but not too much because you will fall off.

HALF PIPE
To make sure you don't fall off, press the kick button when the back tyre touches the white line.

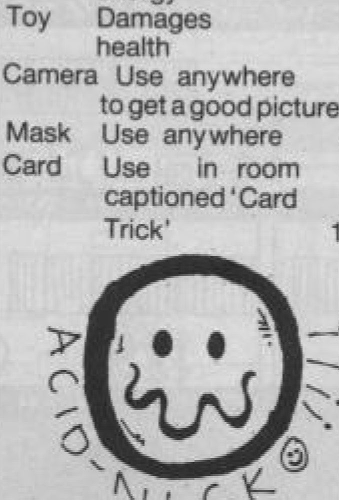
SLOW RACE
When you start off and the bike goes to the left or the right, press the opposite direction. To avoid going too fast you should not leave your finger on the left or the right key too long.

QUARTER PIPE HIGH JUMP
As soon as you take off, watch the height board and as soon as you see a six, press kick.

YOU MUST BE JOKING?

I've already printed the solution to the easy game on *Batman, A Bird In The Hand,* **and now here are some hints to help all those stuck on the harder** *A Fête Worse Than Death* **from** Craig and Darren Hunter **of Doncaster. This table shows the objects, what they are used for and how many percent you will get for using it.**

Object	Used	Percentage
Bulb	Lights up Batcave dark room	1%
Torch	Lights up downstairs rooms	2%
Batarang	Throw at enemies	1%
Ears	Use anywhere to find a clue	4%
Fish	Energy	-
Teeth	Use these to eat	7%
Shades	Wear these in white screens	12%
Wire Cutters	Defuse bombs	19%
Carrot	Energy	-
Coke	Energy	-
Cash	Use in front of slot machine to get a card	9%
Clog	When used this slows you down	1%
Knife	Damages health	-
Coconut	Gives you energy	-
Chicken	Gives you energy	-
Harmonica	Use anywhere to hear a tune	1%
Milk	Gives you energy	-
Toy	Damages health	1%
Camera	Use anywhere to get a good picture	4%
Mask	Use anywhere	2%
Card	Use in room captioned 'Card Trick'	12%



CHEAT MODE MOTEL

Whistle while you cheat, da, la, la. Oops sorry, you caught me off guard there and got an ear full of my singing! I suppose you've come for more cheats, well you've come to the right place because I've got some real ring dingers this month.

ROBOCOP

For immunity on a level from the start, lose all your ammunition and crouch down under men firing at you from above. As your energy begins to run low keep punching to the right. When you are about to die try to let the bullets hit you on your head and outstretched arm. This should give you immunity for the rest of the level. If it doesn't work, practice.
(occupant: **Robert Green**)

3 WEEKS IN PARADISE

When sitting down whilst losing a life press Symbol Shift, D and P for infinite lives.
(occupant: **Claude Longman**)

DUMMY RUN

When on the ropes press C, H, E, A and T which spell out cheat (never!) and you should get that just reward of infinite lives.
(occupant:**Sarah Sandell**)





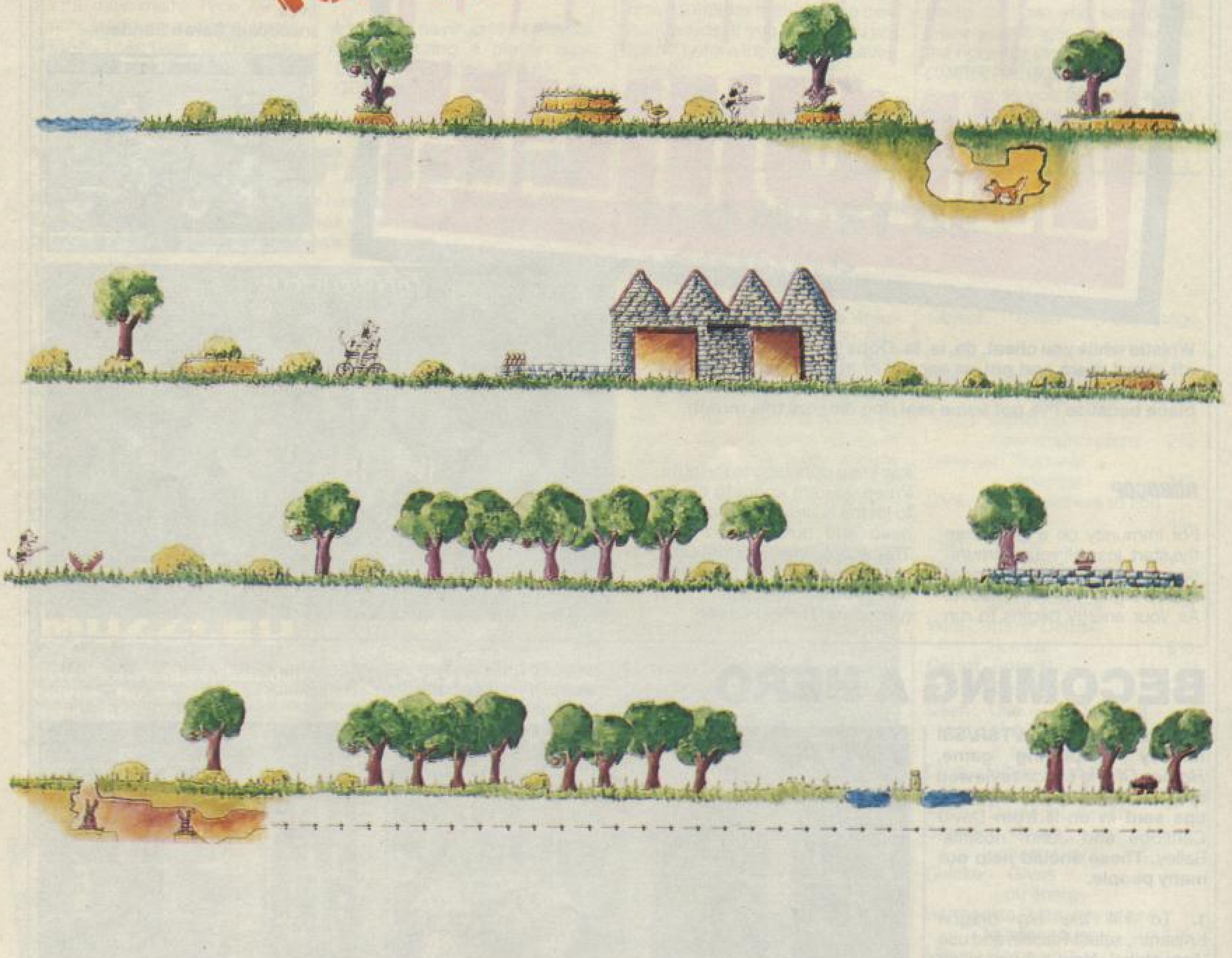
BECOMING A HERO

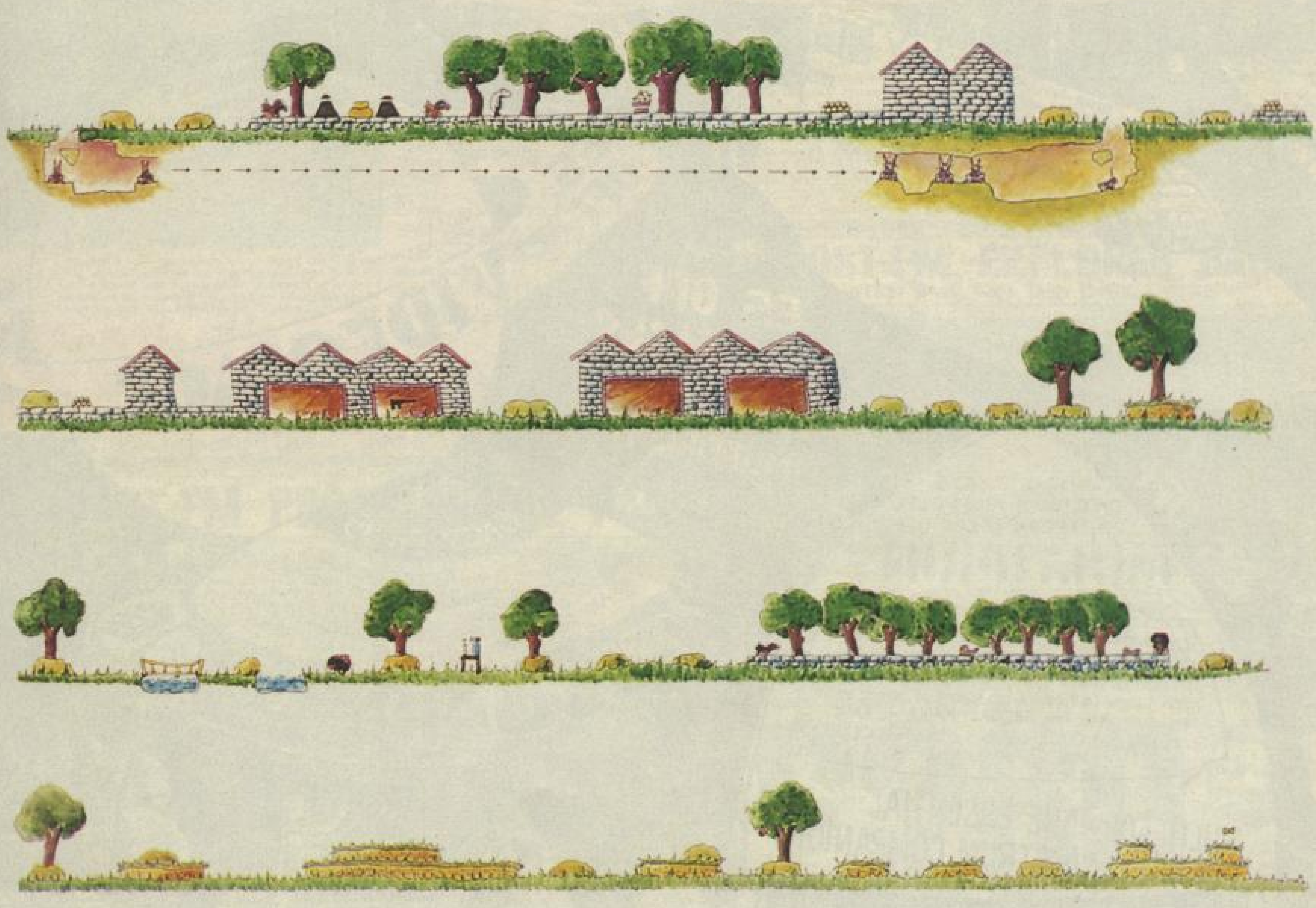
The new US Gold/TSR/SSI fantasy roleplaying game, *Heroes Of The Lance* **reviewed only last issue has already had tips sent in on it from** David Cartlidge **and** John 'nostrils' Bailey**. These should help out many people.**

1. To kill the big dragon Khisanth, select Raistlin and use 'final strike'. Now get him killed and select 'deflect dragon breath' and run left. Now wait until you hear a big explosion and the dragon should be gone. This enables you to complete level eight and finish the game with ease.
2. To complete the game easily select your first four characters as Sturm Brightblade, Tanis, Goldmoon and Raistlin.
3. When in the level five sewers, if you see a troll then he is guarding the exit to level eight.
4. To beat trolls use web or charm. To beat spiders use web or sleep. If you see baby dragons run! All others just hack to death and cure wounds after each attack.



FOXX Fights Back







I bet you can just feel that ice cream squigging between your little pinkies right now. If not read the introduction! There will be more madness next month so I will see you again then. Meanwhile send all that an everyfin' to the usual address . . . **NICK 'NUTTER' ROBERTS, PLAYING TIPS, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB.**






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PBM

BASILISK'S FORTUNE

Hurrah! IAN LACEY keeps a promise! The legendary in-depth PBM interview is here, and no apologies need be made

THIS ISSUE I'm starting a series of special features concentrating on one company at a time, showing how they started and what their intentions are for the future. This month the subject company is **Project Basilisk**, but smaller companies needn't worry, I'll be covering them as well.

EXCITED BY CRIME

In June 1986 **Robert Fortune** decided to start a small PBM company; **Project Basilisk**. Previously a player of ***It's A Crime***, Robert was excited by the concept of playing games by mail and determined to write his own. Basilisk's first game was the hand-moderated ***The Land Of The Basilisk***. This ran for only a couple of months though, as Robert soon realised that the time needed to process turns was unrealistic for a small company. His next game was computer-moderated, and distinguished by its extraordinary title; ***Trolls Bottom***. This was inspired by the **Piers Anthony** 'Xanth' series of books and was planned on scraps of paper and written in Spectrum Basic! Robert then borrowed £500 to buy an Amstrad PCW8256, and converted the program to Mallard Basic. The resulting game attracted lots of players just through the whacky title and scenario, but gameplay kept them playing with Robert continually adding new creatures and adventures. After running for just a year *Trolls Bottom* attracted worldwide interest, being sold to PBM companies in the US, Australia and New Zealand. Back in the UK **KJC Games** bought the rights to the game in UK and Europe. This left Robert free to develop his next game.

His inspiration this time came from horror spoofs, like *The Munsters*, *The Addams Family* and *The Rocky Horror Show*. Robert was also determined to create an easier method of turn writing (words only). The result was ***Creephouse*** – fun, cheap and original. Unfortunately it seemed to lack something in lastability, and is being wound down here in order to accommodate ***Battle Crab***, Basilisk's third game.

ZARGS AND THE STARLEAGUE

Battle Crab is Basilisk's biggest ever venture. With 500 players in each game some impressive hardware is needed. Whereas *Trolls Bottom*'s took £500 to set up, *Battle Crab* required £3000. Despite a couple of adverts you may have seen to the contrary, *Battle Crab* start-up packs will cost around £3. The theory is that £3 is not enough to put people off joining, but also expensive enough to stop people dropping out – as has happened over *Creephouse*. The *Battle Crab* start-up pack will contain Operation and Advanced manuals, and a story based on the game. Three 8ft maps can also be purchased, costing £1 each.

The *Battle Crab* scenario was inspired by *Star Wars* (the spaceships) and the Spectrum version of *Elite* (the trading side). At the start of the game, the Starleague (goodies) storm the Zarg (baddies) city and attempt to overrun it. You control two computer robotic armoured battlecraft (CRABs). With these, you can either help the Starleague for money, or hinder them, gaining criminal status and equipment from enemy craft. Once the invasion is over, the Starleague withdraws and the players adopt the roles of goodies and baddies, fighting each other.

Actions are written as words (as in *Creephouse*), enabling a wide range of inputs per turn. You also get ship construction orders free, once it is suitably equipped, and a 75 character message. The program for such a game is vast. Just the database for players' ships and possessions uses 5 megabytes! After having seen some preliminary turnsheets and reading Robert's thorough description, I recommend that you get in touch with Basilisk as soon as possible. The game is so vast that you'll probably never get tired of exploring it.

Project Basilisk hope to launch *Battle Crab* in the near future. After that, they have another game planned, on which programming has just started. It's called ***Dragon*** and should be ready for launch towards the latter part of 1989. Project Basilisk can be found at **PO Box 24, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 3QU.**

CASTLE WINNER

A quick mention concerning the special CRASH readers' games of Jade's ***The Chronicles Of The Knights Of Avalon***. The five game winners are:

GAME 1: Simon The Narcolept	3,680
GAME 2: Fikkon Five Fingers	4,441
GAME 3: Dragonard	4,187
GAME 4: Faramir	3,410
GAME 5: Plamil	2,650

Now it doesn't take a mathematical genius to work out that the winner, by 254 points, is Fikkon Five Fingers! And a castle will be winging its way to him soon. Well, a scaled down version anyway. So congratulations to him, and all the other game winners who made the competition a good one. If you'd like to play *Avalon*, or find out more about Jade Games, you can get in touch with them at: **Jade Games, Freepost, Southsea, Hants, PO5 1BR.**

IN THE FLESH

I must also mention **The First London Postal Gamers Convention**, to be held at the **Surbitan Assembly Rooms, Maple Road, Surbitan** on the 22nd of April. The convention was set up to replace the BPBMA annual convention which fell through this year. The organisation behind the new convention is very good, and all the major PBM companies will be in attendance, as will I! If you really want to speak to me then just go up to a trade stand and ask (most know me). The convention costs £3.50 in advance or £4.50 on the door, or £2 and £2.50 respectively for PGA members. The reason for this is that the PGA newsletter is also the convention program, and members will already have a copy. So don't think it's a members only con or whatever . . .

Contact Jon Woodall at: **The PGA, c/o MJR Games, The Firs, Flat 3, 10 Palace Road, East Moseley, Hampton Court.**

PHIL KING'S ADVENTURE TRAIL

Ahhh . . . to smell that fresh country air in spring, the sweet aroma of new-born lambs and fresh dung. And just when you think winter is over, you fall into a snowdrift! Oh well, roll on spring, I can't wait for warmer weather, and April 1 when I can get revenge on my sheep flock. Last year they told me my green cords had got lost in the wash, but luckily I found them hanging from a nearby tree. This year I think I'll shock them by making a large jug of mint sauce!

This month I've found out what it's like to live in a goldfish bowl; I had always wanted to know. My 15-year-old pet goldfish Jack reckons it's dead interesting, swimming around plastic castles and shipwrecks. I've also been honing my powers of deduction, investigating a train robbery, although I saw no sign of Phil Collins. So until next month, wear a peg on your nose and watch where you're treading – my flatulent sheepdog even leaves messages on the CRASH answering machine!



FISH!

Rainbird, £15.99, +3 only

Glug, glug. There I am swimming in my goldfish bowl when some stupid human plonks a great big plastic castle in the water. After my initial confusion, I decide to investigate – something fishy going on here, I think to myself. So in I swim, only to be confronted by a familiar voice. Suddenly, everything comes back to me – I am actually a daring inter-dimensional espionage agent, currently taking a relaxing break in the guise of a fish!

The voice belongs to my boss, Panchax – trust him to interrupt my vacation. He tells me it's an emergency: the infamous Seven Deadly Fins have sabotaged a project to conserve water on the fish-inhabited planet of Hydropolis. They have also dismantled a focus wheel which would enable me to warp to Hydropolis. Warping involves transferring an agent's mind into the body of another creature or person, and is extremely painful. To find the three pieces of the focus wheel, I must first complete three separate sub-adventures.

On entering one of the three warps in the castle, I am immediately transferred into the back of a clapped-out van belonging to a hippy band (they're not around at the moment). I have also become human again – well, I would've floundered in my previous fishy form! Finding some clothes and a torch (it is night-time), I wander outside. I plod across dark fields and soon find a ruined abbey. Inside are a group of drunken hippies – the band – sitting around a camp fire. It's hard to believe that a part of the focus wheel is in the vicinity.

On completing this section (no I won't tell you how!), I am returned to the castle where I can enter one of the other two warps. One of these sends me to a forest inhabited by a warp junkie and an exploding parrot! The other transfers me to a recording studio with a short-tempered, 'coffeeaholic' producer (reminds me of someone). When I recover all three parts of the focus wheel, I can use it to enter the body of Dr A Roach, a scientist on the waterworld of Hydropolis. This strange place is inhabited by weird fish-people with human torsos, but tails instead of legs.

Dr Roach's apartment is in Paddlington, but other areas of the city can be visited via the Underground. The many locations include a pub where, instead of drinking, customers sniff special gas in order to get finless. Other innovations include fishofaxes and Fisa cards! But it's not a good idea to dawdle: The Seven Deadly Fins are out to get Roach. So to avoid getting pushed into the path of an oncoming train it's best to get a disguise.

As in previous Magnetic Scrolls disk-based adventures (*Jinxter*, *Corruption* etc), the flexible parser accepts most logical input and permits editing of the current and last command. It also allows up to about ten separate commands to be entered in one line of input. The frequent disk accessing fails to severely interrupt play, although the occasional need to enter anti-piracy passwords is slightly annoying. The lack of any graphics is irrelevant – they would have only required more time-consuming disk accessing and taken up screen space.

With the large vocabulary, problems require much lateral thinking instead of simple word finding. All objects can be examined, often producing a witty response – the fishofax is described as combining the features of a diary and a wallet for four or five times the price!

Although the three sub-adventures don't take too long to complete (Are you sure about this? – Nick), they do add variety – the game isn't wholly about fish. The main adventure requires more skill and exploration, containing many red herrings (groan). But if you get stuck, you can always type in special codes for very subtle hints. However, even failure isn't too frustrating when there is so much side-splitting humour to enjoy. Some adventures use humour to hide a shallow plot, but *Fish!* combines laughs with thoughtful, challenging problems. In fact, writing this review was made infinitely more difficult by the fact that Nick and Skippy were playing it 24 hours a day! (And they don't normally play adventures).

Overall 93% ▶

THE GREAT PEEPINGHAM TRAIN ROBBERY

Axxent Software, £2.99 (48K/128K cass)

Flukeit's the name, and detecting crime is my game, with a little help from my clumsy assistant Blunders. I'm not one of your amateur sleuths though: I get paid for my extensive deductive powers. I've already earned enough from previous cases to afford a nice little office in Scunsdale where I can take a leisurely nap, dreaming of even bigger cases . . . until the phone wakes me. Inspector Hoaden is on the line to inform me about a train robbery at nearby Peepingham yesterday.

After searching out some vital info on Peepingham at my local library, I return home to find Hoaden's limousine parked outside my front door. He gives me the low-down on the robbery. Apparently the train's cargo included a top secret device, being delivered to a Professor Mundle – the fellow paying my extortionate investigation expenses. He wants me to find the thief and recover the device. Piece of cake, I think to myself as I climb into the limo.

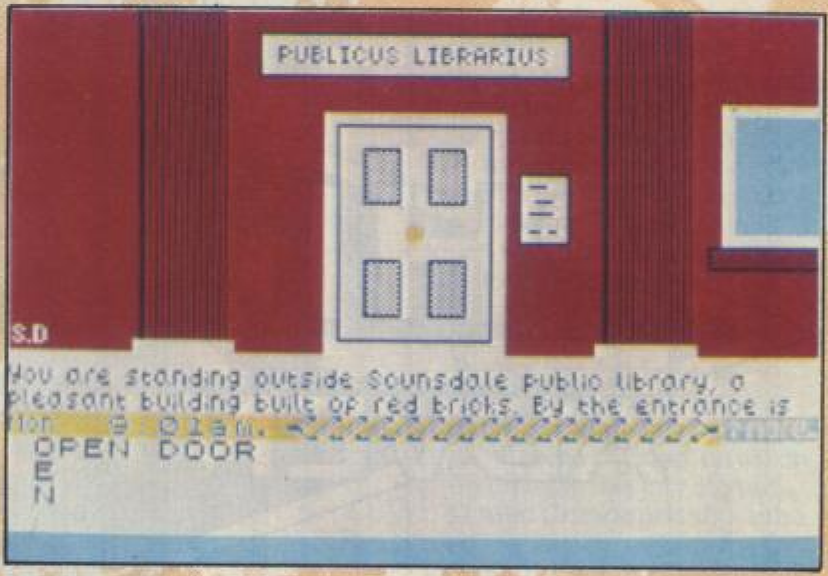
Hoaden drives me to the hospital to collect Blunders, who has had another of his little accidents. He's currently recovering in the Oops-a-daisy ward, taking foul-tasting medicine. He pleads with me to help him escape, but the doctor and matron don't seem to like releasing their patients. A little cunning is needed to get Blunders out. But being a super sleuth, I find a way, and we're soon on our way to the sleepy village of Peepingham.

In the village square Blunders and I part company with Hoaden. We soon find a pub by following our noses: The Dirty Duck it's called, where the local scrumpy cider is sold. I try some, although Blunders refrains – being so clumsy he falls over enough without getting legless. Downing a pint in one go, I soon wish I hadn't – I continue to burp for the next half an hour. Between burps I book a room for the night (with twin beds of course – we're not married).

The room's okay, but it's too early to go to bed so we set off to explore the village. All the usual shops are here, while further afield are the railway station where the crime occurred and a lake with a monk-inhabited island in the middle. The folks round here seem quite friendly – perhaps they'll tell me something about the robbery. Ambling down the high street, Blunders bumps into my old rival, Sam Shovel. He's on the same case and reckons he'll have it sussed by midnight on Sunday. Somehow Blunders and I must beat him to it.

The Peepingham adventure is presented via two windows, the top and largest shows graphics plus all the text, apart from input which appears in a small window below. The simple but colourful graphics only appear on 128K machines, and brighten up the general presentation, although they must scroll up to reveal the rest of location descriptions.

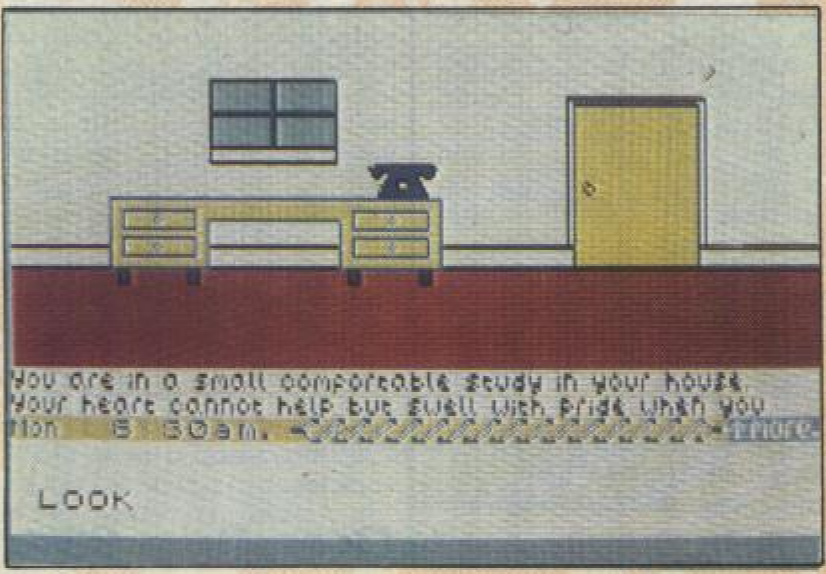
Although the game has quite a limited vocabulary, communication with other characters is possible via SAY, ASK, TELL. Realistically other people won't always do what you tell them, but apparently all characters can perform any actions Flukeit can do himself. This is due to the use of the author's own 'Worldscape' system (no utilities have been used), allowing non-player characters to lead independent lives. Unfortunately, the response to input is slow, although not too irritating when you become accustomed to it. However, the ability to repeat or edit the previous command is useful.



Problems are complicated, and some have very obscure solutions. Add to this the fact that the game is played in real time and you have one very challenging adventure. The inclusion of a RAMSAVE command helps, but sadly this feature is not included in the 48K version. Still, there are plenty of quaint locations to visit and people to meet in a very entertaining, humorous adventure – great value at only three quid.

Author Colin Jordan also wrote *Inspector Flukeit* (70%, Issue 43), featuring Flukeit and Blunders. *The Great Peepingham Train Robbery* was originally to be released by Top Ten software, but sadly they do not now publish adventures. The good news is that it can be bought direct from the author at *Axxent Software, 'Shirwedean', Sandyhill Road, Saundersfoot, Dyfed SA69 9HN.*

Overall 80%



SIGNSTUMPS

Now that Signstumps is well and truly back I'm already hip deep in requests for help. Obviously with only a page it's impossible to answer them all, so I was wondering whether it would be worthwhile to start up a Clever Contacts section like ZZAP! and TGM. Clever so-and-so's who've finished loads of games write in with lists of the games they've mastered, these are printed so the less brainy can write to them asking for help (enclosing an SAE, of course). If you like the idea drop me a line and I might give it a try.

DOOMDARK'S REVENGE

After Samara's (pathetic) appeal for help in Issue 56, PAUL STEPHENSON has contacted me about his *Doomdark's Revenge* pokes – the ones many people were having trouble with. However, instead of correcting his original routine, he's found an easier way to enter pokes. First, load up the game in the normal way. Then immediately go into the LOAD/SAVE routine and while loading/saving press the BREAK key. This returns you to BASIC in which you can enter any of the pokes below.

No mist	POKE 28262,24: POKE 25525,0
Free movement	POKE 33886,24: POKE 33887,25
Harmless dragons	POKE 33611,201
Choose at night	POKE 34388,62: POKE 31423,195
Free warriors	POKE 34601,0: POKE 34639,0
See screen build up	POKE 26009,122
Always recruit	POKE 31957,62: POKE 32064,24
No movement at night	POKE 33270,201
Control characters	POKE 29583,62: POKE 29584,57: POKE 29585,50: POKE 29586,130: POKE 29587,93: POKE 29588,24: POKE 29588,241

Paul's been so helpful that I've decided to award him this month's £30 worth of software.

DIABLO!

MICHAEL PREECE asks how to get into the laboratory.

Get the rags from the corridor below the vu-dome. SEARCH RAGS and you will find a card. Go to the lab door and INSERT CARD.

SIGNSTUMPS

RIGEL'S REVENGE

PERRIE FOSTER ask how to get the objects in the bungalow without being captured.

Get the piece of rubble at the bridge, then THROW RUBBLE AT LIGHT in the bungalow. Go west and get the Rigellan uniform.

LANCELOT

CHRIS HIGGINS says he can't get into Camelot in Part 2.

You have been splashed by a passing cart. To get cleaned up, go to either North or South Warren and wait until someone throws a bucket of water over you from a window. You can now enter Camelot.

INGRID'S BACK

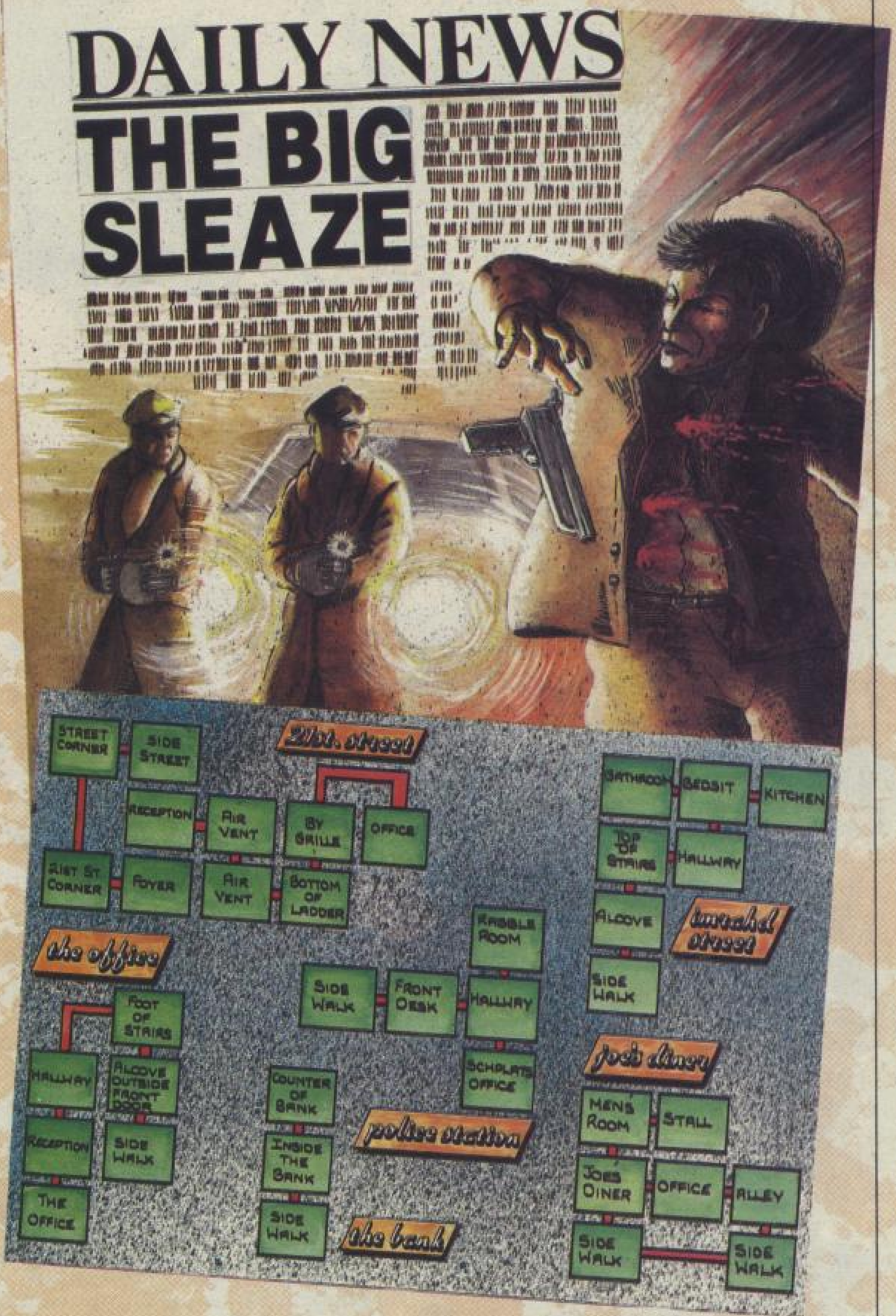
This zany adventure is causing headaches for GARETH JONES. He asks how to get Uncle Dusty to sign the petition.

Go to the windmill, drop the groceries from Miss Farthing's shop, and pull the bell rope. Hide in the bushes until Dusty emerges, then jump out and ask him to sign the petition.

A SIMPLE CASE OF ESPIONAGE

This challenging debut by Skyslip Software has ANDREW HEATH puzzled: he wants to know how to use the telephone and how to leave the area around the house.

First, SEARCH and EXAMINE CLOTHES to find a pen, wallet and cheque book. When you LOOK IN WALLET, you find a card – read this and dial the number (27190) on the card (it's for a taxi firm). Wait for the taxi and CLIMB INTO TAXI when it arrives. SAY TO DRIVER 'TAKE ME TO TOWN', write a cheque and give it to the driver – you are now in the town.

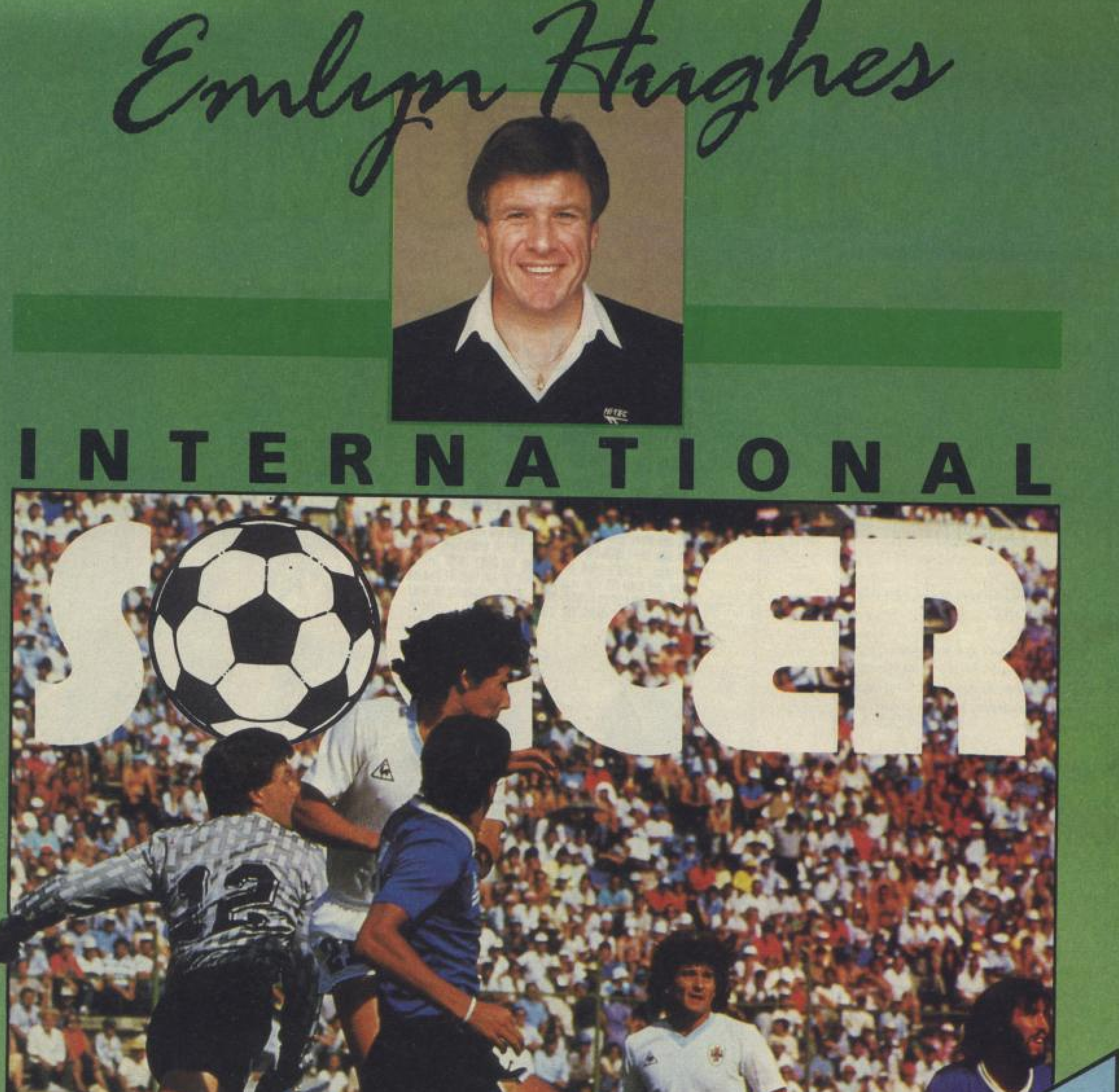


THE BIG SLEAZE

Due to popular request, here is a map of Part 1 by D WILLIAMS and J GOLLEDGE. Due to lack of space (moan, moan), Parts 2 and 3 will appear later (I promise, scout's honour).

If you're still lost in Lord Of The Rings *or wherever, remember Phil King's been there too and survived to tell the tale. If you'd like some help, write in and he'll try to oblige – no personal replies though.*

Adventurers who believe themselves even more precocious than Phil can send in tips and maps in the hope of winning £30 of software for the best advice that month. Send hints or problems to **SIGNSTUMPS, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.**



Emlyn Hughes
INTERNATIONAL
SOCCER
GAME OF THE YEAR!
Winner of CCI Oskars for
BEST SPORTS SIMULATION
and BEST GAME OF THE YEAR

Once upon a time there was a little French software house called Ubi Soft. Born in 1986 it employed just 30 people and took care of French distribution for Elite, Domark and Electronic Arts, among others. Ubi Soft was such a hard-working company that in 1987 it had sales of almost £3 million and soon decided France wasn't big enough for it. By the end of 1989 Ubi Soft planned to be an international software house publishing on most important formats. *Skateball* (85%, Issue 61) was its first, extremely violent Spectrum release, but it's *Iron Lord* that's the flagship of Ubi Soft's plans for world domination.



PREVIEW

TROUBLE WITH THE RELATIVES

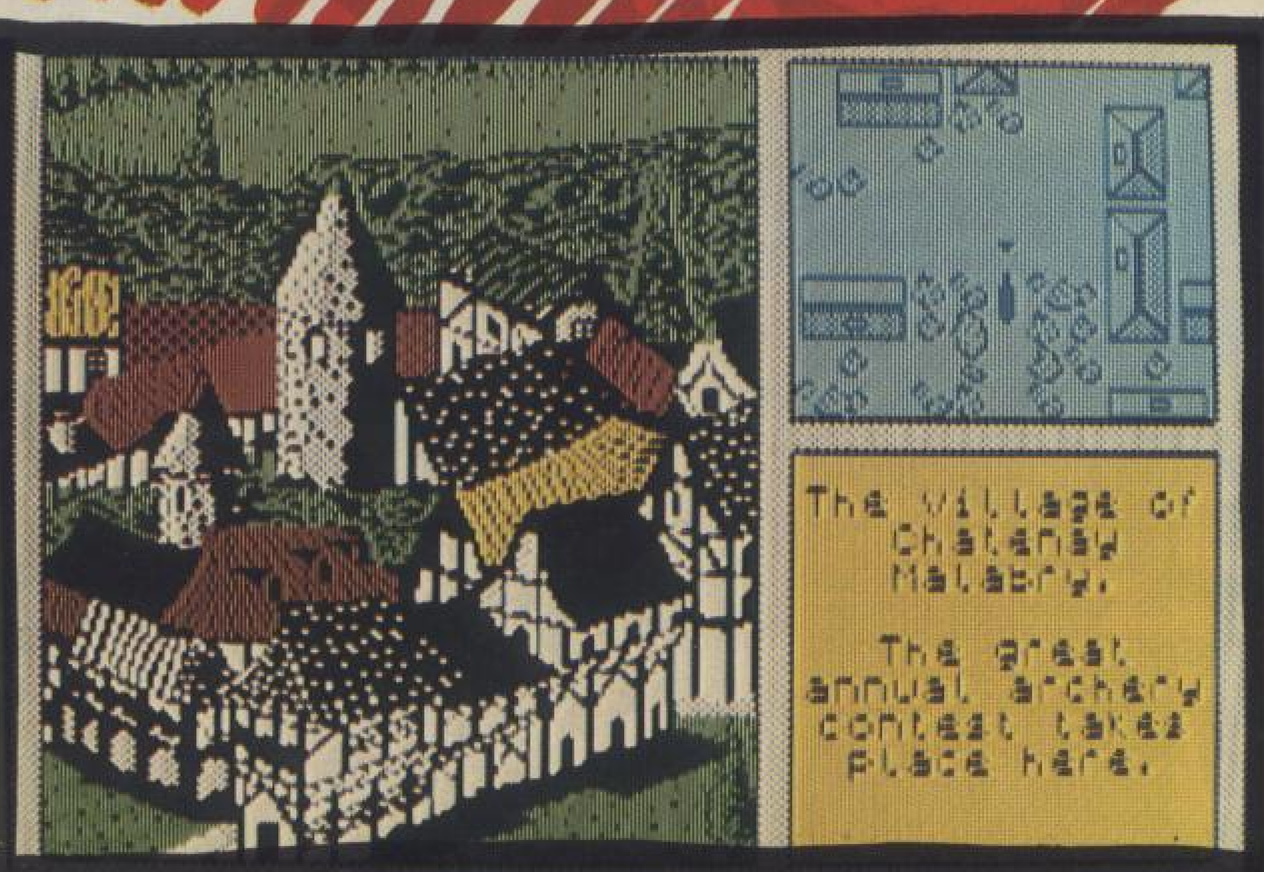
Iron Lord: The Crusader Of Justice begins when you return home after five years fighting in the Holy Land. Your father, the King, has been murdered by your Uncle who has become an evil tyrant. Under his evil reign France has been terrorised by spies and assassins. You are determined to reclaim the throne, but must first win the support of your suspicious countrymen.

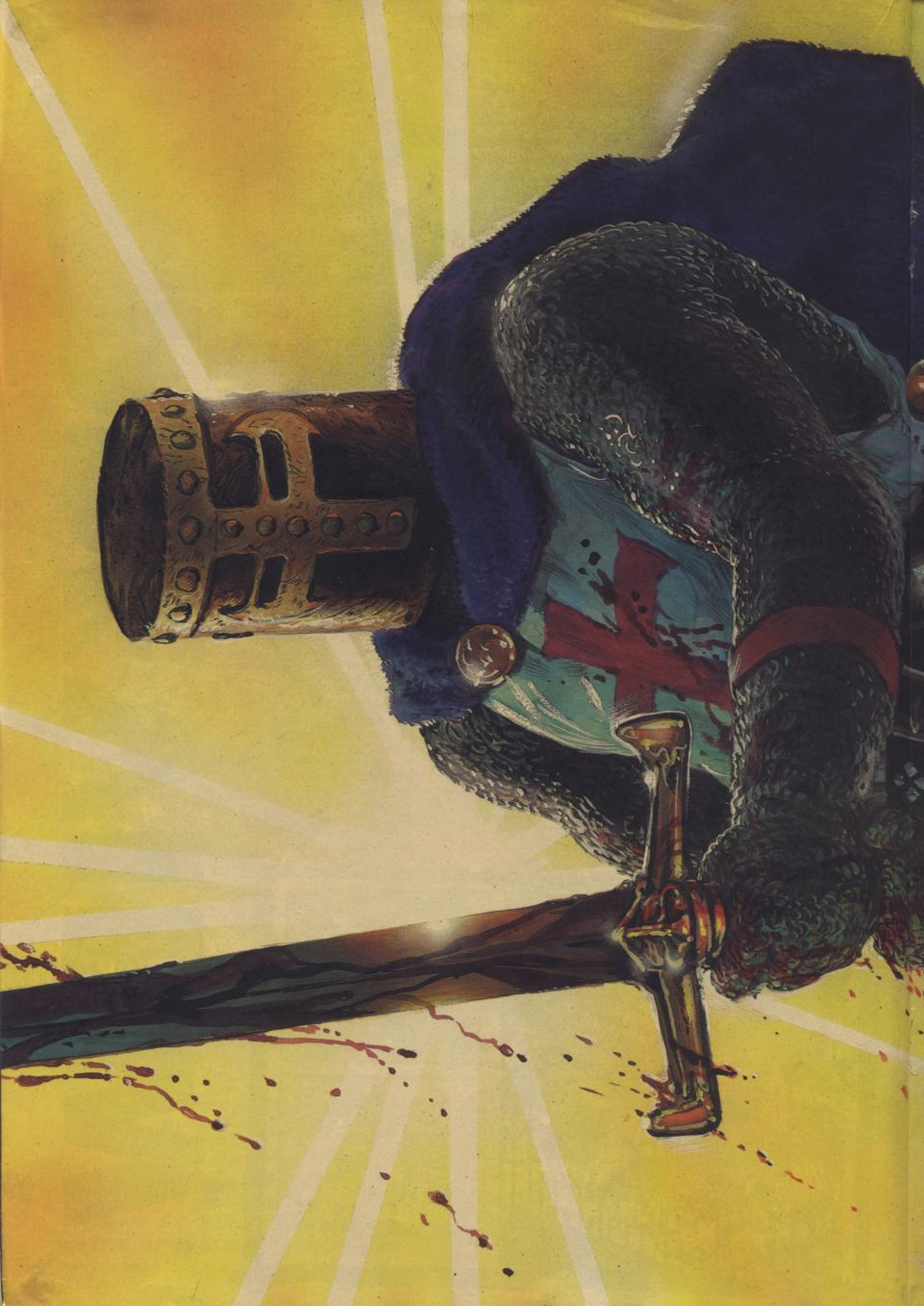
Your quest is a massive one and is made up of not one game, but three interlinked ones with numerous sub-games as well. The first game is an adventure where you must move around the country recruiting an army. The graphics of you walking around are basic, but compensated for by the main window pictures of the village streets. When you enter a building, the main picture changes accordingly and options come up, allowing you to trade and have conversations. There are also sub-games where you must prove yourself – these include a dice game in a tavern, arm-wrestling, an archery contest and even a first person perspective, 3-D swordfight! These are separate loads on the 48K, but all contained in memory on the 128K.

If you prove yourself in all these trials, and successfully persuade people to join you, then it's on to the next section. This is a single 48K load and gives a 3-D view of the field of battle as your army takes on the enemy forces. Using your joystick you can give orders and interrogate units to find out their strength. The number of men in your army depends on how well you did in the adventure.

Defeat your Uncle's army and he takes refuge in the Labyrinth, a maze packed with monsters. This is another 48K load and is an arcade action-style game, with you running around, battling dragons in search of your Uncle. If you manage to survive the Labyrinth you will have completed what must be one of the biggest games ever to be released for the Spectrum.

Iron Lord was originally developed on the Atari ST by six people, including David Whittaker who wrote the music. The Spectrum conversion is being handled by **Ashminster Computing**, a Leicester-based programming house headed by **Roger Taylor**. Originally specializing in Amstrad and PC conversions, once a conversion deal was signed with Ubi Soft they launched a recruiting drive which still continues. One of their first recruits was **Jonathan Medhurst**, a twenty-one year old techie. His first conversion was *Skateball*, after which he went on to *Iron Lord*. His partner on the project is **Nigel Kenward**, a free lance graphic artist in his early thirties who provided most of the graphics for *Skateball*. They've been working on *Iron Lord* for five months already and their biggest problem has been cramming such a big game into the Spectrum. The load for the first 128K game is certainly massive, but the game certainly looks extremely attractive. If you think you've the mettle to take on such a formidable game, the price is £12.99 tape, £19.99 (!) disk and it should be out soon.






CRASH
ZX SPECTRUM
IRON LORD
UBI Soft
OLIVER FREY

IRON LORD

RESCUE THE KINGDOM

AND WIN A MARVELLOUS MOUNTAIN BIKE!!



IRON LORD is the title of Ubi Soft's latest game, set in medieval times when princesses were saved from fire-breathing reptiles by men in tin suits. As one such chap, you're determined to destroy your wicked uncle who has deposed your father, the rightful king. Not an easy task, but then it's not easy being a Comps Minion either. A suit of armour would come in handy once in a while to protect me from the variety of projectiles hurled around the CRASH office!

Knights of old may have been rugged but none were as tough as the first prize which Ubi Soft are giving away – an amazing mountain bike from specialist firm Muddy Fox. The bike on offer is the Muddy Fox Courier, equipped with 21 speed Hyperglide gears, Shimano brakes, wishbone forks, Quick Release sealed hubs . . . need I say more? Oh yes: the guy at Muddy Fox, Gerrard Willis, is a CRASH fan – so no wonder he described the bike as having 'stunning graphics'!

Ten second-prize winners will receive a copy of *Iron Lord*, while ten further runners-up each get some Ubi Soft goodies. So what do you have to do to stand a chance of winning? Well it's dead easy really: just tell us which king owned a round table, the name of his castle, and the name of his queen. When you have the right answers, jot them down on the back of a postcard or a stuck down envelope, add your name and address, and send them to KNIGHTS IN WHITE SATIN COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. All entries must reach us by 30th April, and everyone has to obey the normal competition rules.



MUDDY FOX ®

GET AWAY!

With Joram to the magical world of *Forging the Darksword*

MARGARET WEIS & TRACY HICKMAN

Authors of The Dragon Lance Legends



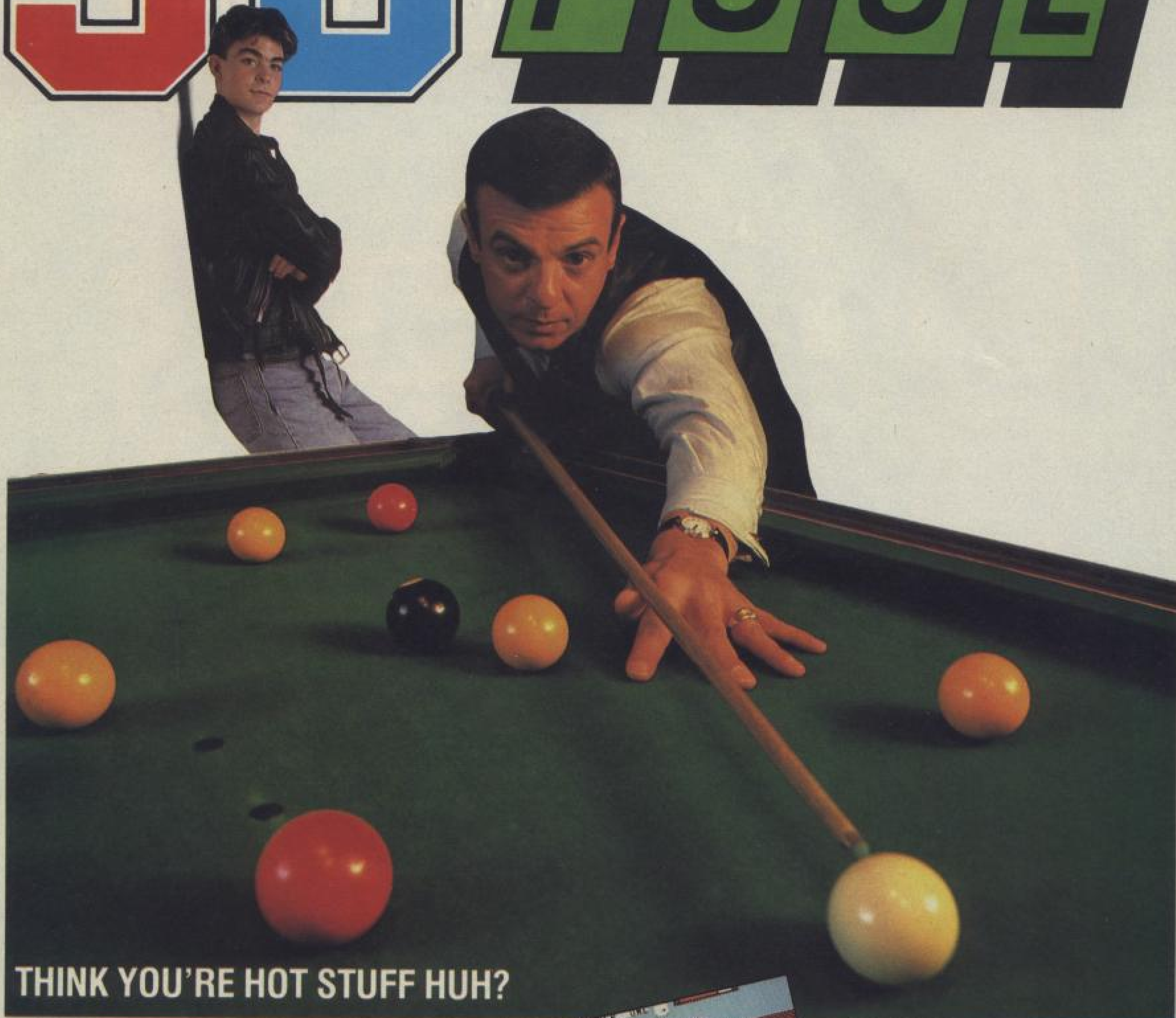
THE DARKSWORD

TRILOGY : VOLUME II

DOOM OF THE DARKSWORD

OUT NOW IN BANTAM PAPERBACK

3D POOL



Well here's your chance to prove it.

European champion 'Maltese Joe' Barbara is waiting to rack 'em up and blow you out.

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Cue up for a shot at big Joe.



BBC screen shots



BBC screen shots

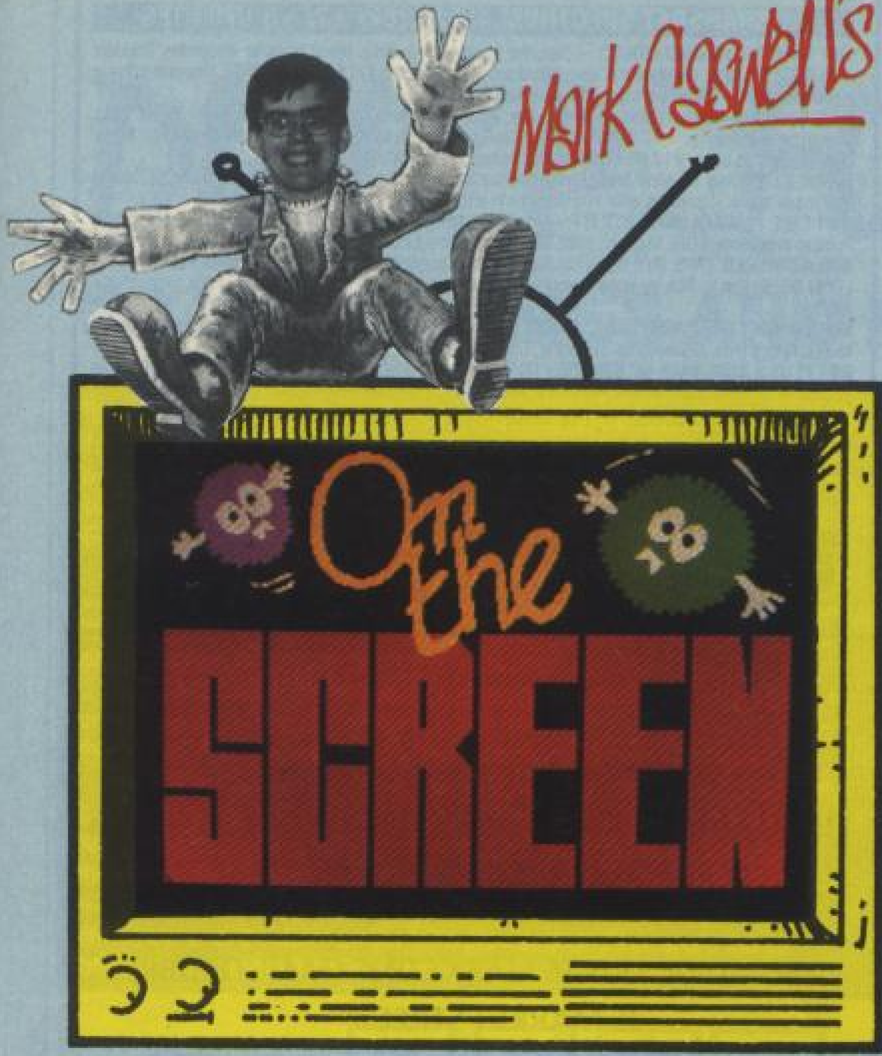
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IBM	£19.99
Commodore 64 Cassette	£9.99
Commodore 64 Disc	£12.99
Amstrad Cassette	£8.99
Amstrad Disc	£14.99
Spectrum	£7.99
MSX	£7.99
BBC/Electron	£8.99

FIREBIRD

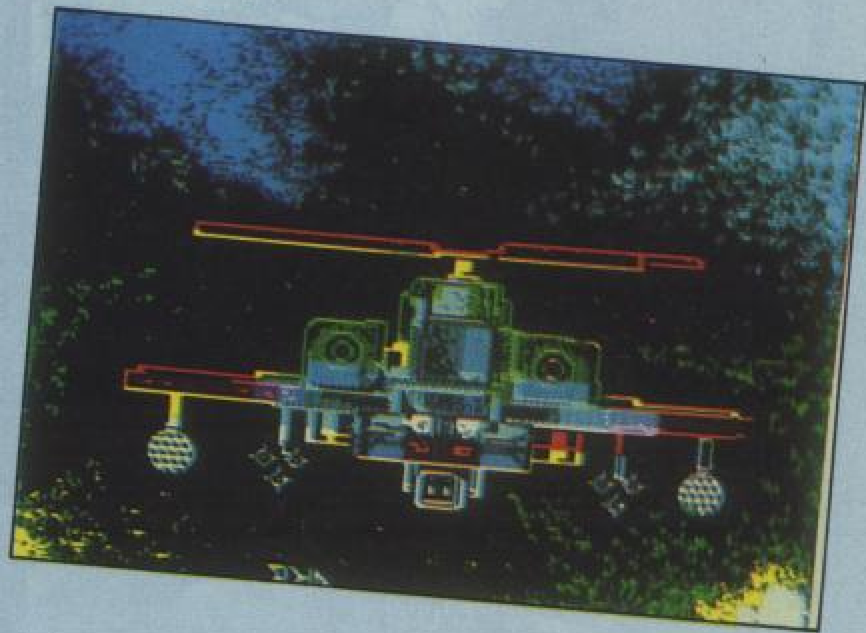
A LEGEND IN GAMES SOFTWARE

Telecomsoft, First Floor, 64-76 New Oxford St, London WC1A 1PS.



The office is nice and tidy now after the spring clean we gave it a couple of weeks ago. All except Phil's corner that is, and that always looks like a bomb's hit it. The Bermuda Triangle of Ludlow, it's impossible to find anything under the piles of envelopes, press releases, and old copies of *Farmer's Weekly*.

It will soon be time to go on that diet again, just when you thought you had lost those extra pounds you gained over Christmas prepare to stuff yourself with chocolate eggs. Easter is in the air, Phil has dug out his old Easter Bunny costume (and a right prat he looks!), and is even now hopping round the office delivering eggs (yum yum).

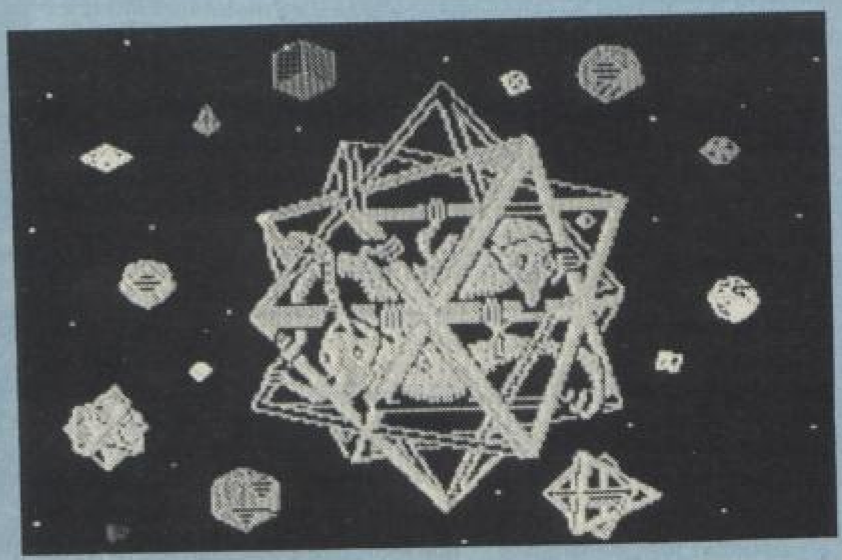


▲ Apparently a guy called Andrew Broadstock won't get any peace from his mate Adam Fox until a screen of his is printed in OTS. So here you are Andrew, don't say we at CRASH fail to please.



▲ Hup two, hup two . . . now this is an unusual sight – Garfield exercising (or rather trying to). Who was the lucky person to pixelate this historic moment? He is Colin Creamer from Eire.

▼ Good lord, this is the sort of thing I expect to see after an evening in the Pig and Whistle getting as nissed as a pewt. N Smith from Doncaster is the perpetrator of this mind-bending little masterpiece, thanks Neil . . . I think.

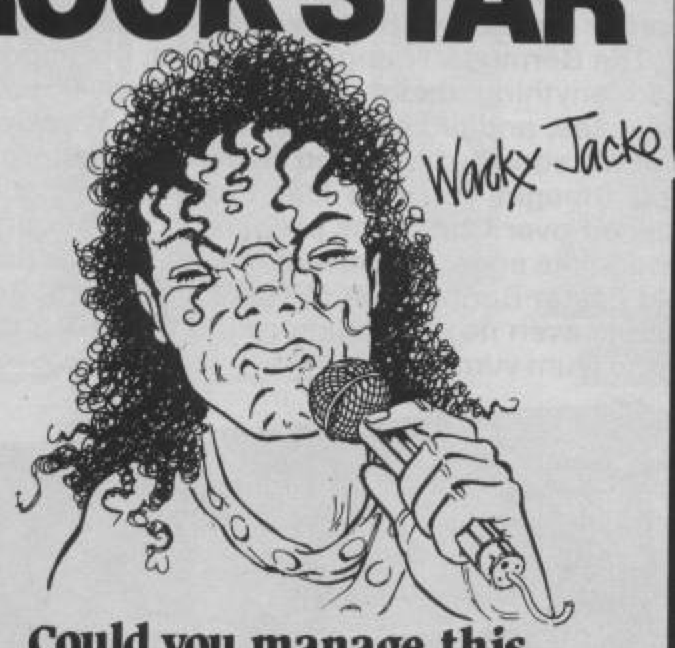




▲ Over the last few months I have received several pixelated *LED Storm* screens, but this one from Ben Clews who resides in Macclesfield is one of the best I have seen. Well done, Ben.

Hmm, what can I waffle on about now? It isn't easy thinking of things to chat about month after month, I could mutter about the weather and how much food prices have risen, but then I would probably sound like Lloyd. So I won't bore you with anymore of my banal wafflings, except to remind you of the prizes the lucky few receive when their hard work is shown in OTS. One fortunate individual will get £40 worth of software, while the runners-up receive £10 worth. So transfer your screen shot onto a cassette (remembering the SAE if you want it returned), stick it in an envelope, bung that into a post box (making sure that you have written our address on it!), and sit and wait. All entries to **Mark 'Rembrandt' Caswell, On The Screen, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.**

ROCK STAR



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URGENT NOTICE Don't be misled by adverts showing 'between prices.' A recent complaint against a Manchester repair firm, Mancomp, was upheld by the Advertising Standards Authority on two counts, "It had stated BBC repairs between £14 and £45 then charged the customer £85." Their guarantee policy was misleading as it did not make clear that all repairs were not covered.

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DIAL 'P' FOR PRIZES!!

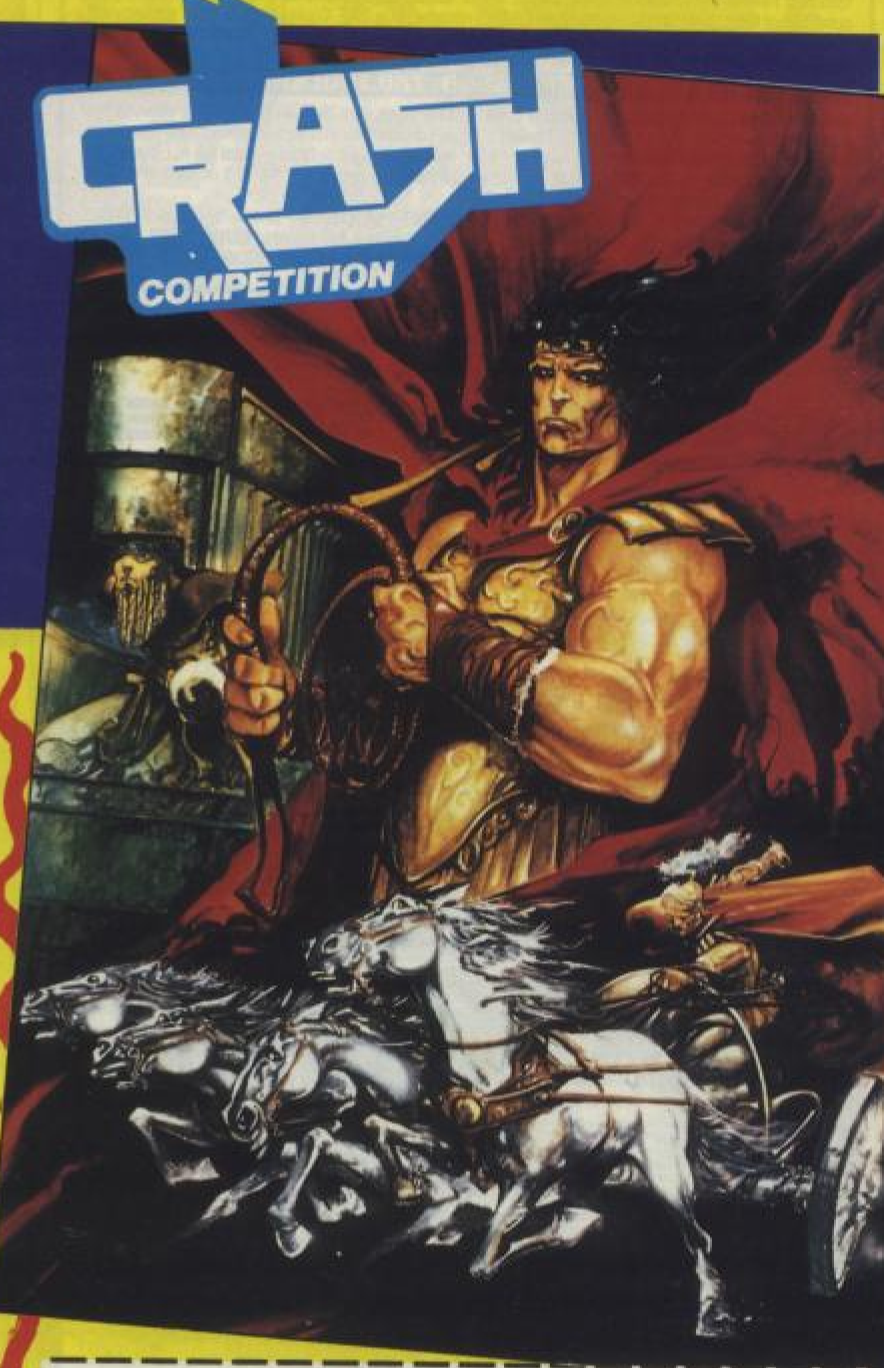
50 KIXX GAMES AND MORE MUST BE WON!!

The name Kixx has long been linked with quality rereleases such as *Gauntlet*, *Leaderboard* and *Metrocross*. And now the Cheshire-based company have added three original games to the list. *Blackbeard* is a 'yo ho ho and a bottle of rum' pirate game which was a 'House Hit' with 81% in Issue 61. A superior *Gauntlet*-style game in our opinion.

Colosseum is another historical game, putting you in the size nine sandals of Benurio, an officer in the Roman Legion who has to do a very nifty Ben-Hur impression in the local chariot race. But this is not a gentlemanly sport – the drivers have a fetish for whipping one another!

Last but not least, *Titanic* sees you donning a wetsuit and diving down to unlock the secrets held in the famous shipwreck. But many predators lurk in the gloom . . . sharks, manta rays and octopi are all out to eat you!

Kixx are so pleased with their new releases that they're giving away fifty games and we can't say which ones, as the winners can choose their own! And on top that, one of the winners will get a £15 music token to splurge on their favourite pop singer or group! To enter, simply ring the CRASH *Competition Hotline* and listen to the three easy questions and tie breaking sentence. Write your answers down on the form provided, and complete the tie-breaker (in no more than 20 words).



☎ 0898 555084

Keeping up-to-the-minute with CRASH

Printed below are the three *CRASH Hotline* numbers. They're open 24 hours a day and each has 160 lines to prevent the number being engaged. Phone calls will only cost you 25p per minute during off-peak time (Mon-Fri 6pm-8am, Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays) or 38p per minute during standard and peak time (8am-6pm Mon-Fri). If you are using your parents' phone or even someone else's, please ask them first!

Line One: **☎0898 555082** *CRASH NEWS AND REVIEWS. All the latest software news as soon as we here it, with thoughts on games that just missed our deadline.*

Line Two: **☎0898 555083** *NICK ROBERTS'S PLAYING TIPS. Hints 'n' tips on the latest releases from Mr Crucial himself.*

Line Three: **☎0898 555084** *COMPETITION HOTLINE. Listen carefully for we shall say this only once (every two minutes!) and loads of prizes are up for grabs every month!*

The CRASH Hotline is brought to you by CRASH Ltd in conjunction with Chatterbox Ltd. So there!

HOTLINE COMPETITION FORM

ANSWERS

1 ....

2 ....

3 ....

TIE BREAKER ....

....

IF I WIN I'D GET MY KIXX WITH ....

SEND TO: **HOTLINE COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1HD.** Entries by April 30.

CHARTS and SCORES

THE APRIL CHARTS

TOP 20 GAMES

1(1)	**ROBOCOP** *Ocean*	■**Bryan Metson**, Huntingdon	90170
2(3)	**OPERATION WOLF** *Ocean*	■**Matthew Hall**, Surrey	540370
3(4)	**R-TYPE** *Electric Dreams*	■**James Henderson**, London	64200
4(2)	**BATMAN** *Ocean*	■**Peter Keightley**, Gwynedd	100%/82%
5(6)	**AFTERBURNER** *Activision*	■**David Young**, Essex	10570500
6(10)	**RETURN OF THE JEDI** *Domark*	■**Chris Pieri**, Kent	69829
7(7)	**DOUBLE DRAGON** *Melbourne House*	■**Colin Irving**, Scotland	79100
8(5)	**THUNDERBLADE** *US Gold*	■**James Henderson**, London	156200
9(►)	**LED Storm** *GO!/Capcom*	■**Stuart Hopwood**, Somerset	976750
10(15)	**PAC-MANIA** *Grandslam*	■**Philip Wright**, Brighton	94560
11(14)	**FOXX FIGHTS BACK** *Imageworks*	■**Carl Gordon**, Swansea	95450
12(8)	**TOTAL ECLIPSE** *Incentive*	■**Bryan Jones**, Dyfed	543250
13(16)	**MATCHDAY II** *Ocean*	■**Colin Jackson**, Southport	10-0
14(12)	**19 PART ONE-BOOT CAMP** *Cascade*	■**Mark Smith**, Yorkshire	97850
15(13)	**DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE** *Ocean*	■**William Howden**, Sheffield	7761
16(►)	**SKATEBALL** *Electronic Arts*	■**James Kirk**, Bolton	25-0
17(11)	**CYBERNOID II** *Hewson*	■**Daniel Brice**, Bristol	55556
18(19)	**TARGET;RENEGADE** *Imagine*	■**Craig Taylor**, Liverpool	637500
19(►)	**TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY** *Code Masters*	■**Neil Brunton**, Washington	45000
20(20)	**CYBERNOID** *Hewson*	■**Andrew Thompson**, Fife	653250

TOP 10 MUSIC

1(7)	**ROBOCOP** *Ocean*	■*Jonathan Dunn*
2(1)	**LED STORM** *US Gold*	■*Tim Follin*
3(3)	**JOE BLADE II** *Players*	■*Andy Severn and Mike Brown*
4(5)	**BIONIC COMMANDO** *GO!/Capcom*	■*Tim Follin*
5(9)	**OPERATION WOLF** *Ocean*	■*Jonathan Dunn*
6(►)	**BATMAN** *Ocean*	■*Fred Gray*
7(6)	**CYBERNOID II** *Hewson*	■*Dave Rogers*
8(10)	**TARGET;RENEGADE** *Ocean*	■*Gary Biasillo*
9(8)	**PAC-MANIA** *Grandslam*	■*Ben Daglish*
10(►)	**XENON** *Melbourne House*	■*David Whittaker*

TOP 10 VIDEOS

1(1)	**ROBOCOP** *Virgin*	■*Peter Weller rampages through Old Detroit*
2(2)	**PREDATOR** *CBS/Fox*	■*Big Arnie faces the ultimate hunter*
3(3)	**ET** *CIC*	■*The Extra Terrestrial phones home*
4(–)	**ALIENS** *CBS/Fox*	■*Ripley participates in a bug hunt*
5(5)	**THE UNTOUCHABLES** *CIC*	■*Elliot Ness beats the booze racket*
6(–)	**A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 3** *Warner*	■*Freddy's here!*
7(6)	**THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK** *Warner*	■*Three witches brew up Jack Nicholson*
8(7)	**THREE MEN AND A BABY** *Touchstone*	■*Tom Selleck's left holding the baby*
9(8)	**SUSPECT** *RCA/Columbia*	■*Cher investigates a murder*
10(10)	**DEATH WISH IV:THE CRACKDOWN** *Cannon*	■*Bronson dispenses instant justice*

A RECORDBUSTING LICENCE



Back in 1984, when *Ghostbusters* the movie started earning its 128 million dollar takings, surprisingly few people knew that the characters were based on real people! Of course the movie didn't help, turning everything into a special effects extravaganza, but in 1986 the real story could finally be told – as a high quality cartoon series on American TV.

Despite being produced by Columbia Pictures – who also made the film – the actual making of this 'all-American' cartoon is in the hands of **CLT/RLT**, 'the largest and most profitable entertainment conglomerate in Europe'. The animation side of this 'conglomerate' is **DIC**, which employs over 300 people at facilities in France, Taiwan, Japan and America. The latter was set up in 1982 with **Andy Heywood**, previously involved with Hanna-Barbera and shows such as *Scooby Doo*, *Popeye* (the new version) and *Yogi's Space Race*. This Californian company handles the creative side of *The Real Ghostbusters* – writing, storyboarding, backgrounds, timing and voice recording while Tokyo does all the animation, painting and filming. It's a highly successful combination which has made DIC a world class animation group, and *The Real Ghostbusters* one of the top US shows.

An indication of the importance of *The Real Ghostbusters* show in particular is given by the involvement of **Ivan Reitman** as an executive producer – he's the man who produced and directed the original film. Like the film, the TV series will be sold the world over – and earn lots of cash from selling its licence to companies like Activision. Before the show even came out in America

▼ Egon shows off his 'catch' in the popular cartoon series



Kenner Toys (*Star Wars*, *Care Bears* and *Centurion*) and a host of others, including a breakfast cereal maker, had been signed up for substantial amounts of money.

The Show

The Real Ghostbusters series features most of the major characters from the film, many of whom are summed up in promotion by a single word description. The leader is Peter Venkman – *opportunist*, Phd class clown and something of a slob. Lead scientist is Ray Stantz, the enthusiastic *idealist* who contrasts with *pragmatist* Winston Zeddmore, the common sense guy who's also a bit of a sucker for strays like Slimer – the eternally hungry pet ghost. Other members of the team are Egon Spengler, the nerdy *electronics genius* and Janine Melnitz the secretary who regards it all as just another 9-to-5 job. And finally there's Ecto-1, a vintage Cadillac hearse loaded full of computerized gizmos but forever breaking down.

The ghostbusters' main enemies are Gozar The Destructor, who can assume any shape it wishes, and Walter Peck – the bureaucrat who doesn't believe in ghosts.

Their adventures are currently being repeated on Saturday mornings on *Motormouth* and are also available on video for £7.99 in **The Hollywood Children's Collection** from RCA/Columbia. Each video has two episodes on it, and tapes five and six are just being released about now.

The Comic

Besides the sell-out toys probably the biggest *Real Ghostbusters* spin-off are the comics. While in America *The Real Ghostbusters* appear in a **NOW** comic, in the UK it's **Marvel** who have the licence and their comic is completely unconnected to the American one. Marvel launched the UK comic in March 1988 to instant success – it was their biggest selling title of last year. The 'cute' subject matter was something of a departure for Marvel, and most of the artists and writers on it were employed specially for it.

There are fourteen or so pencillers drawing strips, plus numerous writers, inkers and letterers working on the comic. Typically, once a script has been commissioned it will take three months for the resulting comic to hit the newsagents. Since in each issue there are four strip stories plus a text one, there will be up to five different writers, pencillers, inkers etc involved every week.

The process starts with a writer's outline of a story. This is discussed with the editor **Helen Stone** before being written up as a full script with panel descriptions and dialogue. Depending on the subject of the story – lots of machinery say – it will be sent to the penciller whose style is most appropriate. On average a penciller will take a week over a five page strip, which then goes back to Helen who often requires changes. In addition all the artwork has to submitted to Columbia Pictures for approval, generally they too will want to make changes to the characters' faces and special equipment.

Once the pencils are finally accepted they're sent to another artist for inking; he or she uses a pen or a brush to go over the pencils permanently. This is a very American way of doing things – in the UK the penciller would do this as well. Lettering, however, is pretty much always done by a separate artist while the final stage – colouring – rarely happens in the overwhelmingly monochromatic UK comics. The finished artwork is then sent for reproduction together with non-artwork pages, such as text-only stories and letters pages.

Since all the writing and artwork for strip stories is done by freelancers, the editorial team who handle features is very small – just three people work on *The Real Ghostbusters* full time in London. The freelancers, by contrast, are scattered all over the country – many live in Scotland – while one artist even lives in Australia! The end product of all this costs 38p weekly and remains one of Marvel's hottest titles.

The Computer Game

The computer game of *The Real Ghostbusters* is based on a three-



player, 1987 **Data East** coin-op which, despite good graphics and gameplay, was never heavily promoted in the UK. Its Spectrum conversion is being handled by the Manchester-based programming house, **Mr Micro**. Established ten years ago, Mr Micro – like so many programming houses – started off as an independent software house publishing their own games such as the *Hunchback*-style *Punchy* (88%, Issue 2). Five years later, though, they sold all the rights to their games to Commodore, Prism Leisure and Amstrad (who still bundle some of their games with the +3). The software house had turned into a development house and felt it had glimpsed the future – the Commodore Amiga. Mr Micro worked with Commodore to develop games for the American wonder machine only to find Commodore then pushing the Amiga as a £1,500 business machine. Obviously the company had been left in a bit of lurch, but **Activision** came to the rescue with their problems converting the fractal-based Lucasfilm games to the Spectrum. Mr Micro accepted the challenge and haven't looked back since, working for a wide variety of software houses, writing original games as well as conversions.

The company remains a small one though, employing just twelve programmers and expecting a high turnover of product from them. *The Real Ghostbusters* is only the latest 'mission impossible' for them, requiring long levels with lots of full colour enemies, to be scrunched down into 48K. Highly sophisticated compression techniques just about make it possible for one load to contain all the full colour graphics and attack patterns.

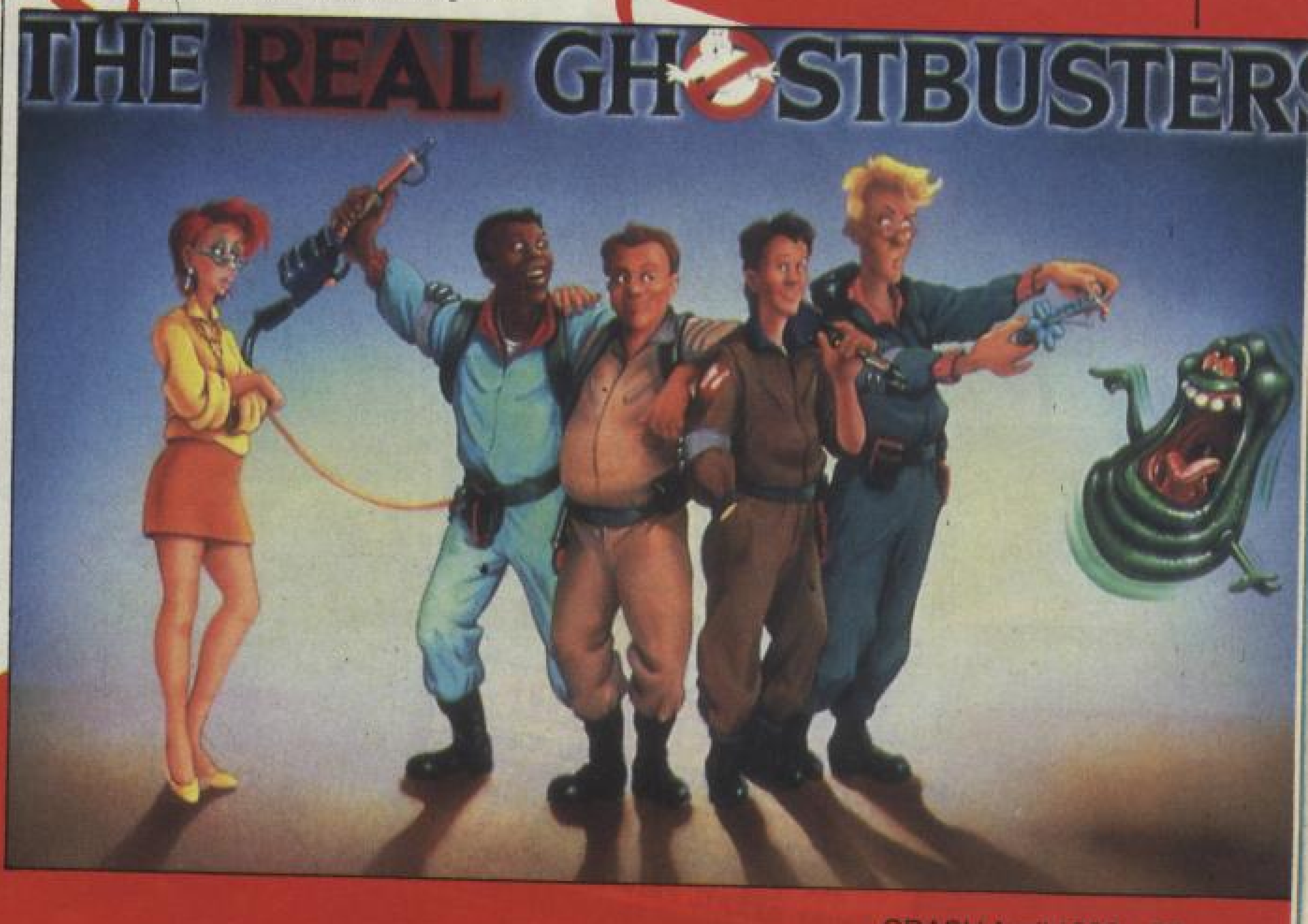


And, as with the comic, all the graphics have to be checked with the licence holders.

Mr Micro are currently working on a number of other projects, but regard all game promotion as the software houses' responsibility and refuse to allow behind-the-scenes tours of their offices, even refusing to give out the names of the programmers working on specific projects. The only thing we know for certain is that **Grandslam**'s imminent release, *Dandy*, is their work and unlike *The Real Ghostbusters* the game design is pretty much their own – consisting of four entire games!

Special thanks to **Karen Foote** at Ray Hodges Associates and **Helen Stone** (Editor *The Real Ghostbusters* comic) for their kind help with this feature.

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COMMS

A RETURN TO NORMALITY!

Recovering from illness, panicked by upcoming exams, PAUL EVANS still continues to communicate . . .

Due to a bout of ill health I have recently had little contact with the outside world (outside of bed, that is). However, I can now say I have just about recovered from the New Year's celebrations! Micronet have been decent enough to reconnect me, and the computer isn't giving me any more hassle. But as I'm currently in a blind panic about 'A' levels (Aarrrrggghhh!), a checkup on the current state of Micronet will be saved to next issue. A big thank you to all the 'Netters who have been sending in compliments about this column and the magazine. It's much appreciated and I'm sorry I don't have time to answer you all.

AN-OTHER BOARD

If you read my article on *The Gnome At Home* bulletin board, then this next piece may be of interest to you. Not long after *Gnome* began, a certain Clevelander set up his own BB on his ZX Spectrum Microdrive system. Run on the infamous 'Micron' software, ***The Other Board*** ran for many years, becoming one of the most famous Micron BBs on-line and the only one to operate 24 hrs! As it has proved impossible to make money from this type of BB, *TOB* (as it became known) cost its sysop quite a bit of money! He kept going, but Micron didn't – it requires special software to be used, and only Spectrum and Commodore owners can access it. So when the new Viewdata format became available at a reasonable price, *TOB* Micron disappeared for six months to be eventually replaced by ***The Board***.

BOARD WAITING

At last *The Board* is here, but was it worth the wait? First the technical side: it's run on a couple of Beebs using ACMB Viewdata software on Voyager modems. The pages are stored on a duel 80 track floppy drive system and it has one phone line.

After logging on you are given a password page. Membership is free, but the password is needed to identify you and your mailbox (yes, mailbox!). Following this formality and a few seconds wait, I was presented with the main menu. The first thing I noticed was an accurate clock in one corner of the screen. This is quite unusual for any viewdata system, and a good idea. I was also told that there was £10 in the bank, whatever that meant! Then I realised that the menu was split into three pages. Here's a rundown on what's available:

System News is just that. It's basically a 'What's New' page, commenting on the latest changes and those that are soon to be made. It also has details on how the board is run, and who runs it.

Chatlines was an area which interested me. After all, how can you have a chatline if only one person can use the system at a time?! Well, after a quick look around I came to the conclusion that calling this area 'Chatlines' was a little unfair. It's just a series of noticeboards, not really designed for user interaction! The available areas are: an open area for general chat, a 'notice' area for announcements, a joke board and the public mail section. Public mail is for users whose private mailboxes might be of interest to anyone. If so they can be placed in the 'public' area.

It was at this time that I noticed a little messaging system on the bottom line of the screen. Similar to the AutoGnome on *Gnome*, it displays little messages about certain events and areas worth visiting. However, unlike the AutoGnome, it doesn't seem to be 'intelligent'.

Mailboxing is a good feature to find on any BB (especially a free one!). The system available is fairly basic but does the job. One type of MBX message (Prestel style) is available with no word-wrap or justification etc. However, it does have one other facility to search for a user by entering their name. The computer finds it and then gives you the details. This system on Prestel would make life a lot easier!

The only Special Interest Group worth mentioning here is the Spectrum area. ***SPECS*** is a database that has been around on Micronet for a few years and seems to have arrived here (the sysop being a co-editor of *SPECS* is besides the point!). I say 'seems' because only the Game Pokes area is available. Computer error or lack of space? Shall we ever know?

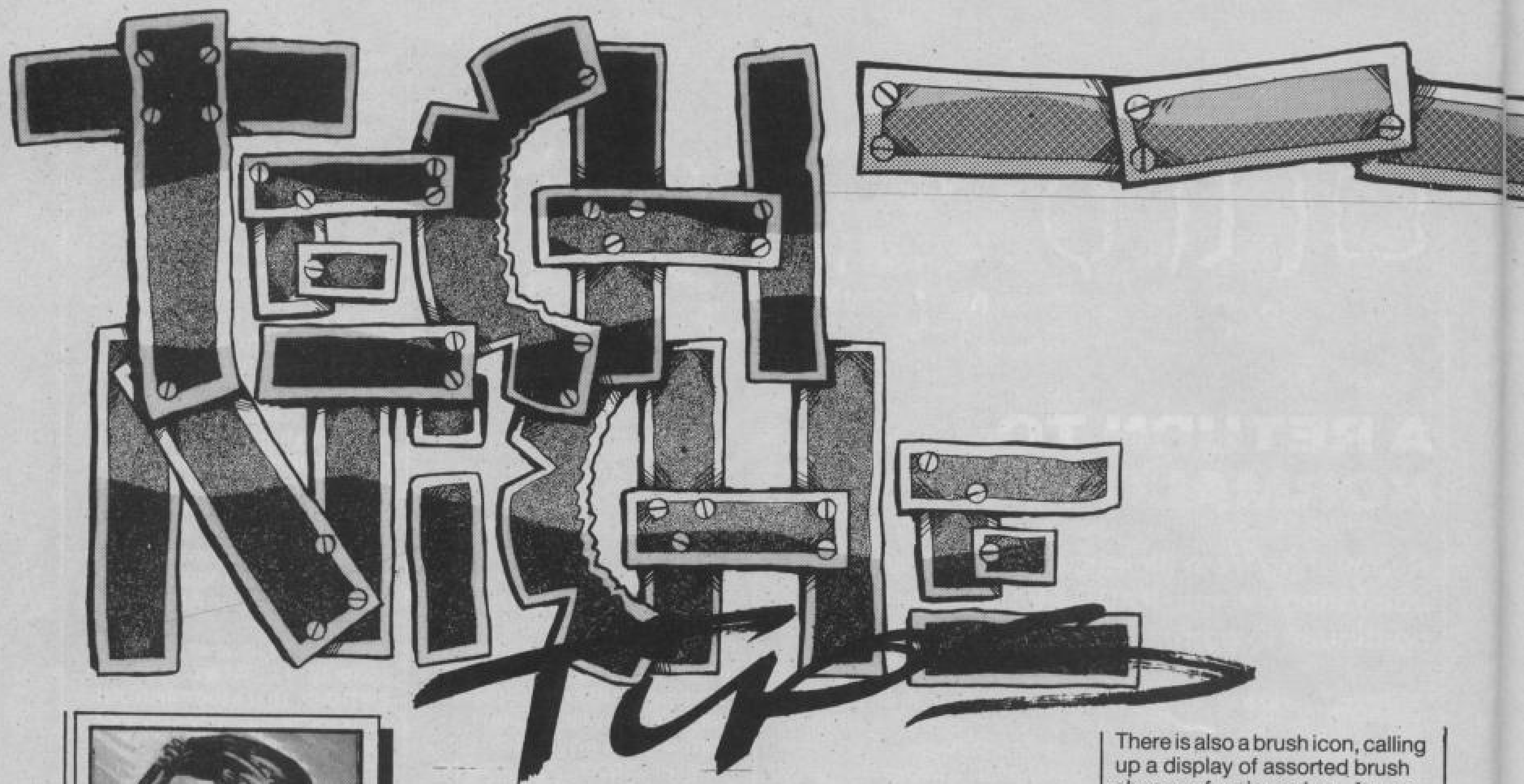
Fun 'n' Games contains the usual banter of jokes and puzzles. It also has a good collection of quotes, eg 'And now for an international soccer special: Man Utd vs Southampton'– David Coleman. From the jokes, you soon learn that the sysop hates people from Middlesbrough, despite the fact he lives there!

The Sysops' Association is an idea from the sysop, who I will now name as **Ron Evans**. It's a group for sysops only and allows all kinds of goodies and advantages. On offer are such things as free advice, software information and possible equipment discounts. It's non-profit and totally independent.

Finally the reviews. Only a minority of these are Spectrum, and I didn't think too much of the actual review quality (too short for one thing!).

That's about the whole area covered. As you can probably tell, it's a bit short and also a bit empty. However, you have to remember it is a new board (despite the sysop's experience) and is bound to have teething troubles. If it can keep going, this board will have a gleaming future.

Should you wish to give *The Board* a call, phone **0624 596241**, 24 hrs, Viewdata standard!





The first *Artist* program came out in 1985, its CRASH Smashed sequel in late 1986, but this venerable Softechnics product remains extremely popular. A +3 version was recently released and IAN CULL decided to see how it stands up in 1989. Also coming under scrutiny are MGT's Fixer and TwoFace, the former promising to solve interface incompatibility problems for +3/+2A owners.

THE ART OF THE MACHINE

Dated has-been or all-time classic?

BO JANGEBORG developed ***The Artist II*** while working on the sequel to *Fairlight*, an impressive and Smashed isometric arcade adventure. Its principal advance over its revolutionary predecessor was an ST/Amiga-style icon-driven control system currently supported by **Datel**, who offer the program, a mouse and interface for £49.95.

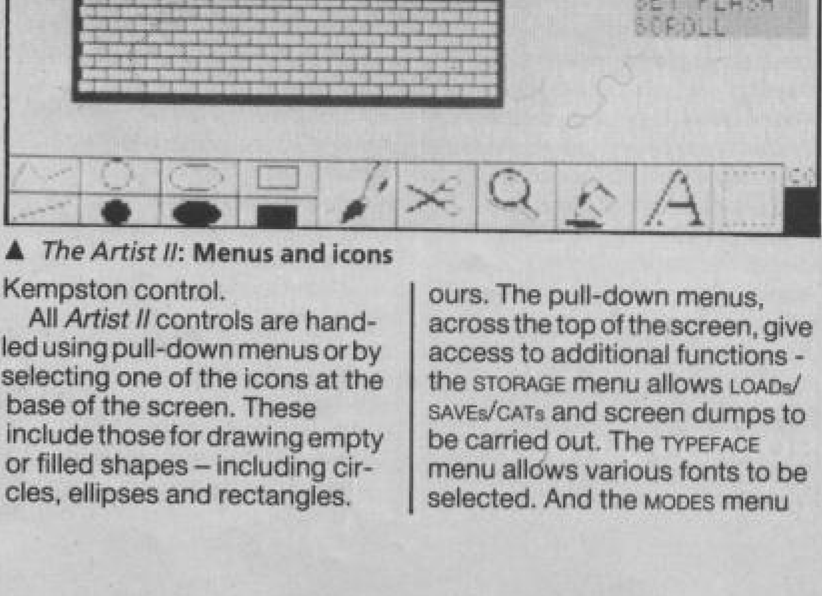
The first thing to say about the new program is that it isn't really all that new. The basic program is unchanged from the earlier version, except that it supports the +3 disk drive and printer interface. Nevertheless, *The Artist II* is a very powerful graphics program, offering many functions useful in creating screen displays.

'an ST/Amiga-style icon-driven control system'

One of the most interesting features of *Artist II* is that it comes complete with a 'Page Maker' program too. This allows screens created with *Artist II* to be combined with text written using Softechnics' word-processing program – *The Writer* (48K version £14.99, 128K version £17.99). Reviewed in CRASH 31 this was judged very impressive, and the two together give a form of Desk Top Publishing on the Spectrum +3 (both mouse compatible). You can even create your own fonts and fill patterns.

On loading (which takes about 40 seconds), *The Artist II* prompts for the AMX mouse – you can use either an AMX or a Kempston mouse (I was unable to test this option, however). Unfortunately it is quite easy to crash *The Artist II* back into Basic (doing a SAVE to a write-protected disk, for example. If the LOADER option was used, this will result in the loss of your masterpiece - so use LOAD 'DISK' from +3 Basic).

As well as driving *Artist II* by mouse, the keyboard can be used for all cursor movements - Q/S up/down and I/O left/right. 'M' is used to select options or set pixels, and 'N' to cancel options or clear pixels. You can also use a Kempston joystick (which I did for this review) but *Artist II* does *not* support the built-in +3 'intelligent' joystick. I occasionally found that control reverted to keyboard only, entailing use of the EXTRAS pull-down menu to re-select Kempston control.



▲ *The Artist II*: **Menus and icons**

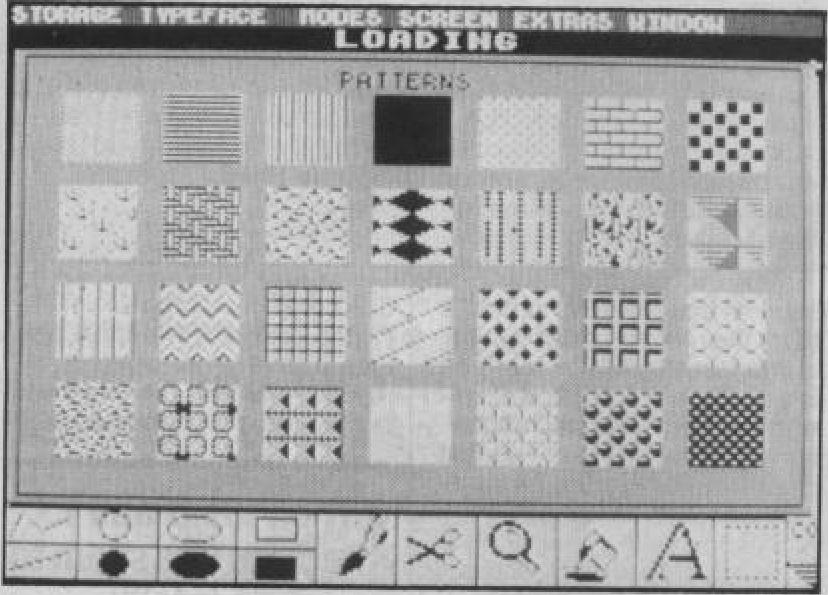
All *Artist II* controls are handled using pull-down menus or by selecting one of the icons at the base of the screen. These include those for drawing empty or filled shapes – including circles, ellipses and rectangles. There is also a brush icon, calling up a display of assorted brush shapes of various sizes, for use when free-hand drawing on the screen. A scissors icon allows irregular shapes to be cut out of the screen display and pasted back elsewhere (quite complex to use, but very powerful). The magnifying glass icon allows sections of the screen to be enlarged for detailed work, and an A icon allows text entry and a dotted rectangle icon is used to set up (rectangular) windows.

'Desk Top Publishing on the Spectrum +3'

At the bottom-right of the screen is the current colour and fill pattern – selecting either of these brings up a menu of colours. The pull-down menus, across the top of the screen, give access to additional functions - the STORAGE menu allows LOADs/SAVEs/CATs and screen dumps to be carried out. The TYPEFACE menu allows various fonts to be selected. And the MODES menu

allows the way that other operations will function to be set (eg text can be laid down transparently, or in colour).

The SCREEN menu allows the full screen picture to be viewed, and either the top or bottom section to be displayed for working on (the menus & icons mean that three lines of the full screen are lost). There is also an OK option, which stores the current screen



▲ *The Artist II*: **Predefined fill patterns**

– if a mistake is subsequently made, the undo option will restore the OKed screen. A pattern option puts a chequerboard pattern over the picture, allowing attribute alignments to be made more easily.

The last menu option is the WINDOWS one – this allows a predefined window to be cleared, inverted, scrolled, moved or copied to a new position on the screen. There are also options to 'thicken' or outline the picture, and to re-scale the picture into a new size and position. If no window has been defined (or the window has been closed) then any of these options will operate on the whole screen picture!

LOADing and SAVEing screen files is achieved by choosing the STORAGE menu, and selecting the appropriate option. A CATalogue is then displayed, and the SCREEN$ filename should be typed in – there is no chance to 'back out' here, and specifying a filename which is not a SCREEN$ can cause havoc! There is also an option to ERASE a file from the disk. One annoying problem here is that the disk motor continues to run after the disk option has completed and the *Artist II* display is restored - to stop this, do a disk CAT, and wait for the motor to stop before pressing the space bar.

Alternatively, edit the Basic program, and insert RANDOMIZE USR 14495 into line 2. This may also help other +3 programs which leave the disk running. The STORAGE menu also offers options to SAVE/LOAD fill patterns (which can be altered, along with the character fonts, by choosing options on the EXTRAS menu). There is also an OTHER option, which seems to do nothing – left in from the 128K version, and should switch storage to TAPE, but doesn't; and a VERIFY option, which simply gives a 'Nonsense in Basic' error message.

There are also four print options: large or small colour or grey scale. The *Artist II* uses the +3 printer port, but does not use the +3 dump routines – my printer, an ancient Epson MX80, could not print the *Artist II* dumps, even though normal +3 dumps are perfect.

Finally, the Page Maker option calls up a new list of options, selected (confusingly) by pressing a number 1 to 8. From here an A4 sized sheet of paper can be created bit by bit, using *Artist II* screen pictures, and *The Writer* text (up to 7000 characters). There are functions to cut out bits of the *Artist II* screen, and to 'flow' text around the pictures as they are fitted onto the page.

'A chequerboard pattern makes attribute alignments easier'

But you always have to be careful of LOADing a new screen picture when the EXTRAS up option is selected (which allows the bottom of the picture to be altered). Apparently this confuses the program – the new picture is loaded in the down-position, but the up option is still set. This can be sorted, by using the WINDOW SCROLL function on the whole screen.

Overall, *The Artist II* is a very powerful graphics package for the Spectrum +3, but it's a pity that after all this time the product wasn't more polished, with bugs eliminated and proper instructions for the +3. *The Artist II* can be purchased on +3 disk for £19.99 from **Softechnics, 36-38 Southampton St, Covent Garden, London WC2E 7HE**. Alternatively the Datel pack is available from **Datel Electronics Ltd, Fenton Industrial Estate, Govan Road, Stoke-On-Trent**.

EVEN WHILE MGT gear up for releasing the SAM Coupé (see News) they continue to support the Spectrum with new products. Two of the most interesting are the **Fixer** and the **TwoFace**. While the former has proved unexpectedly popular, the latter has proved over-ambitious and is unlikely to be continued in production.

The Fixer is a small circuit board and edge connector designed to allow owners of the +2A to use the MGT Plus D disk interface. Regular readers will know the +2A is the black cased version of a +2 with a +3 circuitboard inside. Since the +3 has a redesigned edge connector many interfaces are incompatible with it. MGT have subsequently been surprised by the interest in this gadget, with people hoping it will solve problems with other interfaces as well. Apparently some high street stores are even talking about stocking it.

The Fixer comes in two basic versions, both costing £9.05. A standard version will connect the +2A to the Plus D, while another version allows the Opus Discovery disk drive to work with the +2A. Obviously the Fixer only solves interface problems, and games which crash due to +3 changes in the ROM chips will be unaffected by the Fixer.

'In 48 Basic the Fixer runs almost every interface I connected to it'

To see how well the standard Fixer works I connected to my +3 and gave it a whirl. In 48 Basic it runs almost every inter-

+3 BUGS AGAIN!

I HAVE HAD some response concerning the printer problems experienced by **Adrian Dixon**, regarding his **Silver Reed EX32** and +3 paging subroutine so that the Printer strobe signal is normally high, rather than normally low. My printer (an old Epson MX-80) works perfectly with or without the pokes, but obviously other printers are more strict. (The Brother 1109 is another that needs the pokes). The signal is supposed to be high normally, so it would appear that yet another +3 bug has been unearthed.

Aidan Orton also asks about a replacement chip for his Multiface 3. This is a specialised chip, Aidan, designed by Romantic Robot. I therefore think that their repair price of £10.95 is quite reasonable. I cannot imagine what you were doing to damage it!?

On the subject of Romantic Robot, I have had a number of readers expressing interest in **Genie** for the Multiface 3. I have managed to patch my original 48K version of Genie to run quite well on the +3, but am still working on the 128K version. It is interesting to note, however, that Romantic Robot were at one time claiming to be developing Genie +3. (Mr. B. Walton of Whitley Bay sent me a copy of a note sent from them in April '88 assuring him that Genie +3 would be available - I was told much the same when I ordered my Multiface 3). Romantic Robot's other Multiface program, **Lifeguard**, does run successfully on the +3. However, since the Multiface 3 MUST be active in order to re-load disk-saved games, these programs are less useful than for the other Spectrums. Perhaps users should have two Multiface 3s fitted.

Various readers are also voicing concern over Spectrum programs that will not run on the +3. Personally, I have not yet had any trouble (but I have a backlog of new software which I have not yet had time to load and play). If you write in with problem programs, CRASH will try compiling a complete list of them (and manufacturers, if some are worse culprits than others). ▶

TECH MAGS

AFTER LAST month's coverage of the Miles Gordon Technology Plus D disk interface, a quick look at the 'official' support magazine – FORMAT. This is a paper-only production, as opposed to the disk-based magazines reviewed recently. The October '88 issue contained, amongst other snippets, a review of the *PCG Wordmaster* program (to be looked at in detail in a future Tech Tips), an adventure section in the style of a story about playing adventure games, some MIDI jargon explained and programming sections on cutting down the size of Basic programs and adding new machine code commands to Basic via the Disciple/Plus D interface. The November issue continues the adventure story and MIDI section, as well as the two programming sections. There is also a discussion of the SAM Coupé. The Christmas Special has, as well as the regular sections, User Defined Graphics for use in BASIC games, a screen dump routine which works in many different sizes, a Catalogue Sort program and a Basic Battleships game for two – played over the Spectrum network (for owners of the ZX Interface One or Disciple interface).

FORMAT is received by all members of INDUG, the official MGT users group. Membership of INDUG costs £10 per year. However, a 3 month trial of the FORMAT magazine alone costs £3. Full membership of INDUG brings additional benefits, such as 5% discount on MGT products, utility programs on tape, etc. INDUG, run by Bob Brenchley, can be contacted on 0452 412572, or by writing to 34 Bourton Road, Gloucester GL4 0LE.

face I connected to it. The ZX Interface One and microdrive combination worked perfectly (thought trying to select +3 Basic crashed the Spectrum immediately). The SwiftDisc II interface (reviewed next month) also worked fine in 48 Basic, but was also usable after the SPECTRUM command was entered from +3 Basic (ie 'quasi–48 Basic'). This gives the advantage that the extra memory is still accessible to machine code. Multiface 1 and 128 both run on the +3 via the Fixer – in 48 Basic or the quasi mode, with Multiface 3 running too! This meant that I was able to run Genie on my +3 at last – loading games using Multiface 3, set up to put the machine into 48 Basic after the load, then using Multiface 128 to run Genie 128.

Using what the Fixer is designed for, I had similar results. The Plus D interface worked fine in 48 Basic or quasi-48 Basic, but would not run under +3 Basic. The interface

'The TwoFace has proved over-ambitious and is unlikely to be continued in production'

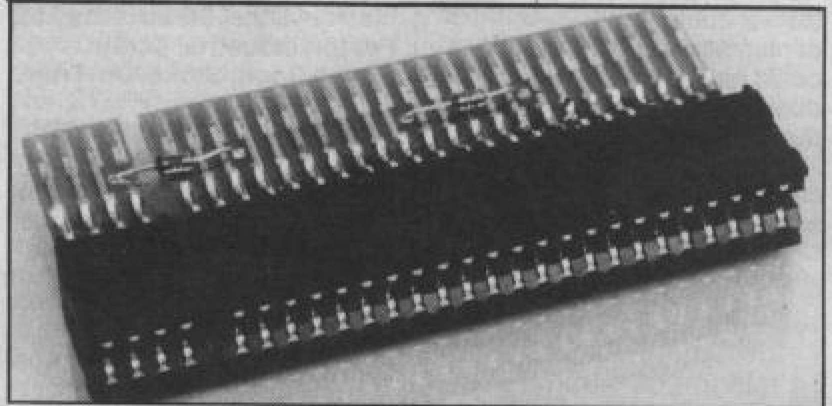
will, curiously, boot from +3 Basic (by typing RUN) but crashes when booting has finished.

Miles Gordon Technology tell me that the Plus D does work in 128 Basic on the +2A so the +3 disk system must be causing problems. I don't know how much Amstrad would charge for their add-on disk drive, assuming that they bring it to market, but my money would go on the MGT Plus D or Sixword Swiftdisc system (both much faster than the +3, and a lot more compatible with existing utility programs).

The MGT **TwoFace** is another add-on aimed mainly at Plus D users. It is reminiscent of the old Currah Micro-slot, in that it allows the Plus D (which has no expansion connector) to be used on the Spectrum along with other interfaces. It is more sophisticated however, in that a switch allows either device to be isolated, and there is also a built-in Kempston joystick interface.

When a Plus D is fitted to the TwoFace, it is mounted vertically, the combination extending some 6 inches above the desk (with the disk drive cable emerging from the top) - so anyone who has the Spectrum immediately in front of the TV may need to raise the screen so it can still be seen. A metal bracket (supplied with the TwoFace) allows the Plus D to be bolted rigidly to the TwoFace, so that there is no wobble.

The switch on the TwoFace allows the Plus D (in the top socket) to be active in the forward or centre position. The rear socket (at least, whatever is plugged into it) is active in the forward or rear position. The built-in Kempston joystick interface is always active (unless an internal wire link is cut, which does not void the guarantee).



▲ **The miraculous** Fixer **from** MGT

Which interfaces work in the rear connector along with the Plus D interface is a problem to answer. Some devices won't work because they clash with the Plus D in such a way that even the disabling switch on the TwoFace cannot help. Others won't work because the Spectrum itself cannot drive both interfaces at one time (some Spectrums have an 'underpowered' edge connector and cannot drive more than one device at once).

Miles Gordon Technology suggest that the best method is to try the required combination of interfaces and TwoFace (there is a problem-solving flowchart with the TwoFace documentation). However, they advise that interfaces such as the ZX Interface One, Swiftdisc and Alphacom printer are unlikely to work. Interfaces like the Opus Discovery and Beta interface, and even a second Plus D, should work okay.

My own tests largely confirm MGT's advice. The Plus D and ZX Interface One seem to be totally incompatible! The Sixword Swiftdisc II seems to run OK, provided that the Plus D is disabled using the switch. However, the Plus D is unable to operate usefully. My Alphacom printer and Plus D combination tended to work OK (most of the time) provided that the switch was correctly moved before each device was used – rather laborious, and it makes printing disk catalogues impossible! Trying the Rotronics Wafadrive and Plus D gave rather different results – the Plus D worked fine but the Wafadrive crashed as

'The Plus D and ZX Interface One seem to be totally incompatible!'

soon as it was initialised.

So, the TwoFace will mainly be of use to Opus Discovery or Beta interface owners wishing to upgrade to a Plus D system (it is a shame that it is not Interface One compatible to allow upgrades for those users), or for those Spectrum users simply needing the additional edge connector (for example, the non-Disciple Multiface 1 & Plus D work fine together via the TwoFace, provided that the switch is used to keep them separate). The other possible TwoFace purchaser is a Plus D owner needing a Kempston Joystick interface, since one is built in. At £29.95, the TwoFace would be an expensive joystick interface, but gives the option of adding other hardware to the Plus D at a later date. Remember that if the TwoFace does not work for you, MGT promise to refund the cost of the Plus D if it is returned undamaged.

In-depth coverage of your favourite computer's insides and appendages will continue next month with, hopefully, a look at the *PCG Wordmaster* and a detailed examination of the Sixword Swiftdisc II Upgrade. **But as with all the best columns, the right to change everything is reserved – just in case something more exciting comes along (like my cheque). Futile letters urging me to keep my promises, offer advice/information or ask for help should be sent to** Ian Cull, Tech Niche, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.

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RUBBER FANTASIES

I say I say I say . . . what do you get when you cross acidic humour with latex? Answer: a hernia! No, seriously (surely not?!), it's *Spitting Image*. MARK CASWELL went behind the scenes to see the mick taken out of a CRASH competition winner . . .

Puppet makers Fluck and Law first became known for plasticine caricatures made for magazine and book illustrations. Their dream, however, was to somehow make their creations move (cue mad scientist laughter). The pilot *Spitting Image* show was made in June 1983, with the help of graphic design company **Robinson Lambie Mairn** and TV producer **John Lloyd**. With such an original idea – a satirical puppet show – and some unforgettable caricatures a series seemed inevitable. But surprisingly a lot of TV companies just didn't want to know, and it wasn't until later in the year that Central TV finally provided the necessary backing.

A great many celebrities must now wish it had never happened. David Steel, for example, is convinced his pocket-sized portrayal severely damaged his half of the David-and-David show. Michael Heseltine, by contrast, wanted to buy his puppet – appalling the show's makers. Attracting up to 14 million viewers the show has become phenomena, with a numerous spin-off records and books – remember the 'The Chicken Song'? (Yes, but I wish I didn't – Nick). And of course everyone has favourite sketches; like Mrs T turning into the Alien, or the superstar Pope watching old 'on tour' videos of himself.

The TV shows are made in the Midlands, but the (in)famous puppets are created at Limehouse Studio, in the heart of the London Docklands. As you can imagine, a major upheaval is needed to shift the tons of equipment needed for the programmes up to Birmingham each Sunday. But how are Mrs T, Groovy Gorby, Wimpy Bush, (and the *real* latex face Phil King!) made? The winner of the Domark *Spitting Image* competition, 17-year-old Steven Martin from North London, went down to Limehouse Studio to find out – and see his own caricature puppet made.

HOW'S IT DONE?

First off, Steven's face is carefully studied by a caricaturist. Most of the time, celebrities can't (or won't!) be present at this stage, so photos or videos are used instead. Drawings are made of Steven's phizog from a lot of different angles. Once these drawings have been approved by the puppet makers, a solid clay model of Steven's head is created from them, approximately one fifth bigger than the life size.

At this point in the process, one of two different types of mould can be made from the clay model. A fibreglass mould may be used to make a foam-latex puppet, or a plaster mould for a latex puppet. The difference between these? Well, a foam-latex puppet has more flexibility around the mouth (foaming at the mouth perhaps?!), but the latex puppets tend to last longer. So Steven opts for the latter.

From these humble beginnings a puppet begins to form. A hollow head is cast from the plaster mould. When this has cooled, a hard skull is added along with the eyes and hair. That takes care of the head, so a body is then made (ever feel like Dr Frankenstein?!) from light foam – the sort used for mattresses, padding, Nick Roberts's stomach etc.

The only thing missing now is clothing. So to satisfy Mary Whitehouse (oo-er!), a wardrobe call is required. Costumes come in various shapes for two main sizes of puppet. The largest puppets are roughly one-and-a-half times the size of an average person (but only half the size of Mark Caswell!). Smaller puppets (including the one presented to Steven) are the size of large dolls (not those kind, Mrs Whitehouse!).



► Steven, Mark Caswell and the Spitting Image team. Now which one's the puppet?!



PUPPETRY IN MOTION

On set, each puppet is controlled at arm's length by between one and three puppeteers. One person sticks their hand inside the head to control the mouth. The other arm is inserted at one of the elbows of the puppet so that a gloved human hand appears at the end of the sleeve. If another arm is needed, a second puppeteer is drafted in. A third person controls the swivel and blinking of the eyes from a short distance, using high-tech gizmos. But if the puppeteer is covered by the puppet, how on earth can he see what's going on? Well, a monitor is placed on the floor so that he can track his own movements.

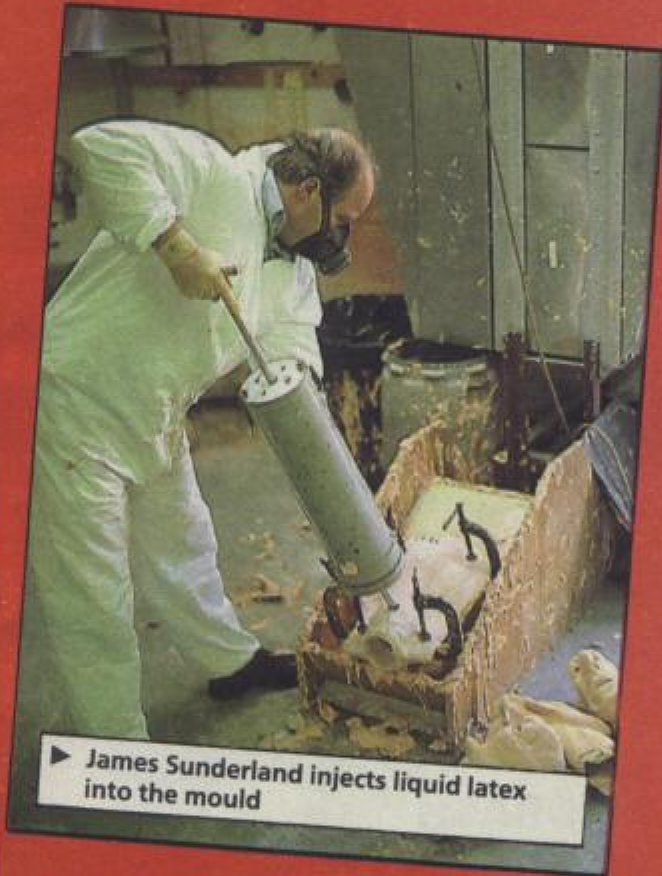
Smaller puppets are also held at arm's length, but are controlled by stiff rods inserted into their hands, which are a few feet in length (the rods, not their hands!). These are waved around to make the arms move, and it only needs someone to put the words into the puppets' mouths and there you have a Spitting Image.

Even when a puppet is looking rather ragged, it isn't wasted. Old puppets never die – they are simply cut up and recycled! Noses and chins from different celebrities are used to make generic puppets – take Bob Dylan's nose, Bruce Forsyth's chin and Prince Charles's ears, and you have Phil King!

So on Tuesday the 14th of February, Steven Martin meets Steven Martin. After a quick lesson on how to operate his alter ego, he is hustled into a room for a photo call along with the *Spitting Image* crew (you can never keep these guys away from a camera). And at the end of the day it's off home with Steven II tucked under his arm. When the Queen Mum was rumoured to be due for appearance on the show there were protests in Parliament, but Steven, at least, seems happy to have been seen through the distinctly warped eyes of Fluck and Law.

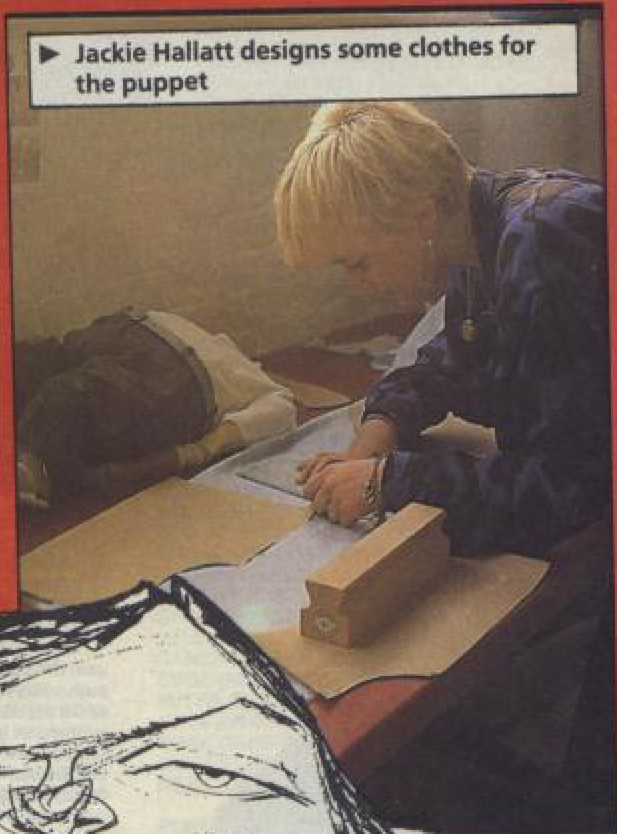


▶ Steve Mansfield puts the finishing touches to the clay model

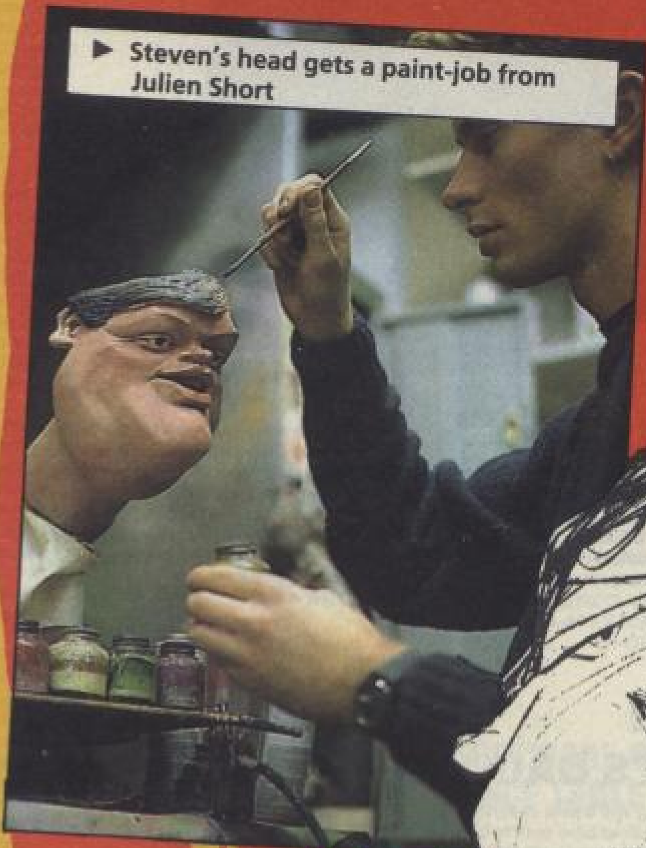


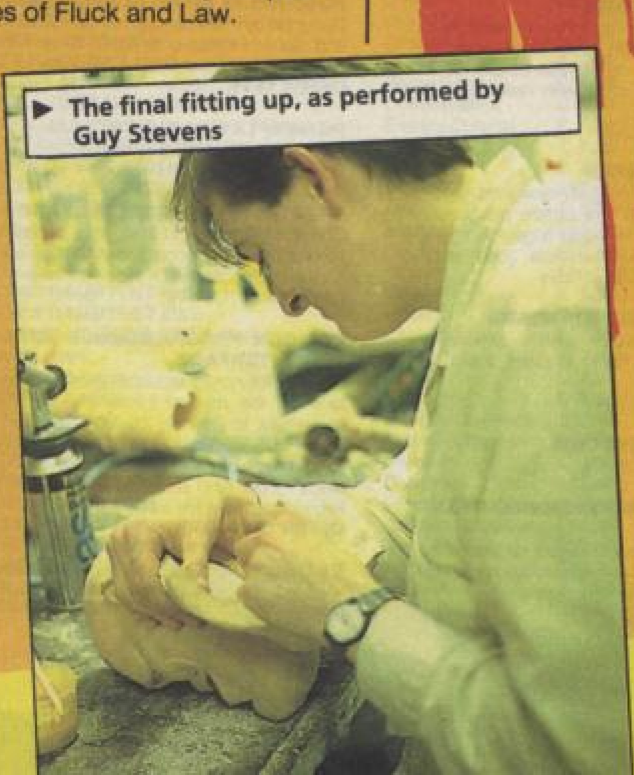
▶ James Sunderland injects liquid latex into the mould

▶ Jackie Hallatt designs some clothes for the puppet



▶ Steven's head gets a paint-job from Julien Short





▶ The final fitting up, as performed by Guy Stevens



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THE MYSTERIOUS CRASH CHALLENGE





▲ Mark confidently greets the challenger

MIKE 'SKIPPY' DUNN, he of the florescent green socks and vegan leanings, is back on CRASH and worried about it. Rumours of false bravado, lost causes and brutal violence are about in Ludlow . . .

It was one of those nights. There was a distant sound of loud music coming from the other side of town. I sank deeper into my raincoat. The drizzle continued. In the artificial yellow light of the streetlamps it seemed like there was nothing we could do. Tomorrow, Monday the thirteenth, was the day that (to be read in an ominous whisper) Mark Caswell would play The Challenge . . .

It all started a couple of weeks ago. We got this letter from a guy, you know the sort, said he wanted to take on Mr Caswell at *Afterburner*. Said his name was Williams, Richard Williams. Well, you know, we couldn't refuse; there was honour at stake. He came from Sutton Coldfield (not . . . ?!). Yes, Sutton Coldfield.

We realised too late (about lunchtime) that we didn't really have much hope of winning. Richard's arrival was imminent; Mark was struggling to push his score beyond the seven million mark. We were worried, very worried. You see, this Richard was a man who casually admits to having played the game for *at least* an hour a day, every day for the last two and half months, no less. Still, our Markybaby had no choice – things had gone to far by now – we pointed a letter opener at his head, sat him down and made him practice, and practice, and practice and (got the idea?).

Richard arrived, with his partner, Bryn Owen , at the prearranged hour. Things started without delay. (None of those wimpy courtesies here, matey!)

THE NEED FOR SPEED

Three ten minute rounds, that's what we agreed. Both players have to make do with the multiload tape version (because we couldn't get hold of any disk copies!), so they are at an equal disadvantage. Joystick selections and all those sort of things are made, and the aircraft carrier rolls into view. In unison, the players make lots and lots of exhaust smoke (I hope they're using lead free petrol!).

Stage one passes without anything interesting happening. Jolly good job too, 'cause even I can do round one! Mark takes the lead at the end of the first stage with a score of half a million, to Richard's paltry 350,000. Ha! Maybe we haven't lost this one! Both players lose lives on stage two (now, now, no sniggering!) and both begin the third at around the million mark.

But . . . what's this? Richard begins to edge in front, and another of Mark's planes disappears into the dust at 1,270,000.

Many zoomings later (at the end of stage four, to be precise), Richard's lead has increased marginally – 2,589,000 to Mark's 2,119,000. But by the end of stage seven Richard is clearly soaring away with the round, while Mark seems to be in a terminal dive – the scores are five and half million to three and half, with Mark in possession of just a single life. Frantic calls of encouragement from the rest of the CRASH team seem to have an effect though, and Mark somehow survives the next two rounds without going down in flames. Richard's lead is unassailable however, and at the close of play Mark is crushingly defeated by 5,189,500 points to Richard's 7,120,000.

OK, so that's not the most significant of high scores, but Richard was looking rather confident; somehow, I think that might be related to the ten lives he had in reserve. Still, there's hope a-plenty for success in the second (little did we suspect!)



SHOOT DOWN

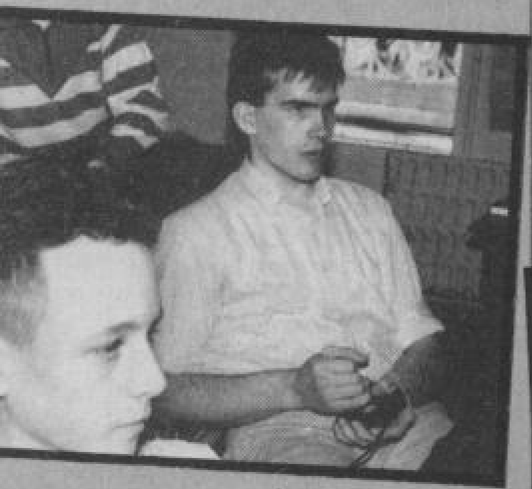
Despite vicious slander by our photographer on my musical taste in between the two rounds (to the effect that anyone who listens to Cabaret Voltaire is a numbskull, hmmmm . . .) we manage to bolster Mark's ego and convince him that he does actually have some sort of chance (albeit a very small one) of winning this round.

Thus deceived, round two



▲ Mark Caswell: Man or machine?

began. Obviously now warmed up, Richard kicks in the after-burner (well, he presses the space bar, but that doesn't sound very thrilling, does it) and bombs through the first three rounds with a magnificent score



▲ The challenge begins!

of three and a half million. Mark is, at this point, trailing by about two million, which could conceivably be an acceptable loss at the end of a game, but after three rounds??

So, two lives behind, Mark makes a not-so-valiant struggle for the rest of the game, but doesn't actually carry it off very well. At the end of stage five, he's three million down to Richard's 4,710,000 and by the end of the ninth (and the ten minute limit) Richard has 8,322,000. Mark doesn't actually make it this far. A scream from Phil's corner indicates that the time's up. (Phil's the only person in the office advanced enough in today's technology to own a digital watch that plays silly tunes and counts down from ten minutes).

I can't say that the final score surprises me. Richard has 9,336,000. Mark . . . well, Mark has 3,168,000. Dit non plus, as they might say in Français. As if that in itself isn't bad enough, Richard decides to carry on the game he's playing. First, he takes us to the lofty heights of eight figure scores, then on to 20,000,000 and then, just to



make Mark feel really bad, he dies just short of finishing stage 24, which (correct me if I'm wrong) is the last one. At this point Mark emits a shriek of indignation and begins beating Richard over the head with his joystick, aided and abetted by a baseball bat wielding Phil King!

The brave challenger falls to the floor with horrendous injuries. But I'd suspected something like this might happen and I'm prepared; a quick blast on the old hunt saboteur klaxon and everyone's reeling to the floor in shock. Unfortunately so am I – the CRASH office isn't much bigger than the Comp Minion's. Once everyone calms down we bandage Richard's head, present him with Phil's favourite light shade and write out profuse apologies to the poor lad.

After he leaves I ask the Ed about some kind of payment for saving the challenger's life. He replies, writing on the same pad, that since Richard has still been severely injured – and the CRASH team permanently deafened – he doesn't think he owes me anything. In fact, he's going to sue me unless I write out some kind of report on Mark's PCW . . .

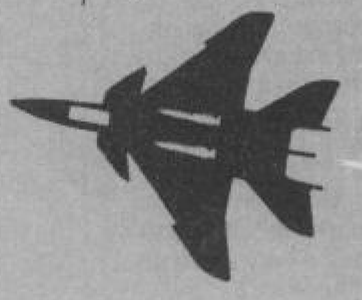
Well, it's a dirty job – Mark's PCW is covered in coffee-flavoured gunge – but then whoever said life was fair? Ludlow is a mean village, a place of sudden violence, shadey pizza parlours and shops so small you have to step outside to change your mind. Someone has to tell it the way it is, and maybe I'm that guy.

© Mike Dunn, 100% Animal Products Free. And what a brilliant piece of writing it was. I'd like to thank everyone involved; my girlfriend for her socks, and Lee, my moth, for not eating them . . . erukgharihgharghhhhh!

◀ Revenge of the CRASH reviewers!

▼ Huge G-forces push Richard back into his seat





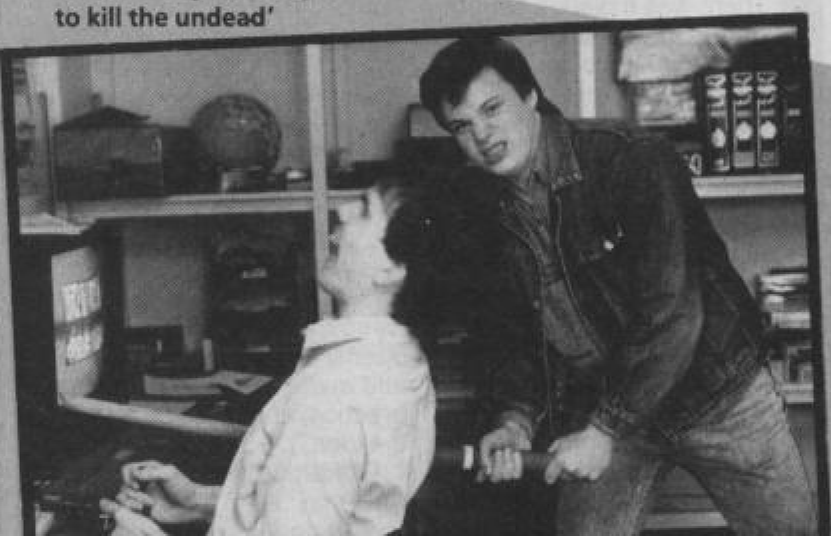
Dear Phil

I hear you've got a bit of a lead foot on US Gold's turbocharged coin-op Smash *LED Storm*, been bragging that there ain't no-one fit to share the celestial race track with you. Well, they can say Kylie Minogue can sing, and England will win a football match, but some things just test a person's tolerance to breaking point. I've been enjoying some Lazer Enhanced Destruction myself and my latest score is ....
If you still think you're a Demon Driver, meet me at the tower and find out what *real* speed is . . . !

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▼ 'There's only one way to kill the undead'



CRASH

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Spectrum software for sale, arcade, strategy or adventure games are available from 99p to £5.00. Please send an SAE to Mark, 8 Eleven Acre Rise, Loughton, Essex IG10 1AN if you would like a list. Thanks!

Spectrum 48K, Lo-profile keyboard, joystick interfaces, etc. + much more hardware, business, art and games software. Worth over £300, selling for £150. Send SAE for list: Chris Jackman, 3 Albion Terrace, Lexham Road, Litcham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE32 2QQ.

Speccy 128, M/face One, Interface One, two microdrives, 31 cartridges, joystick, £100+ worth of software, £50 worth of mags. Whole lot worth £300, sell for £170. Phone 0703 420374 after 4pm. Ask for Tony.

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Sinclair printer plus 7 rolls £20. Interface One and Microdrive plus 26 cartridges £50. Multiface 128 £20, computer table and stool £20, Spectrum 48K with DK'Tronics keyboard, tape recorder, joystick, games £40. Ring Alan 0279 34252.

Spectrum 48K, Kempston joystick, tape recorder, three binders of INPUT and £200+ worth of games. Original price over £350, SELL for £150. Jonathan Murphy, Lorne House Lodge, Douglas Street, Castletown, Isle of Man.

CRASH collection for sale! Issues 1 to 30, all in very good condition, includes Xmas issues, posters. Offers to: Pete Agnew, 16 Turnberry Grove, Cudworth, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S72 8ER.

Spec +2, joystick, £150's worth software, £125. Opus Discovery disk drive, 5 disks £70. Multiface 128 £25. Or the lot £170. Write to Nick Hurrell, 30 All Saints Walk, Mattishall, East Dereham, Norfolk NR20 3RF.

Bargains, twin Wafadrive +64K WAFA all in box only £50 ono. Also original Elite (with Lenslok) £12 + Surfchamp (Sinclair User Classic) £6. Also over 200 Multiface pokes only £1. Ring Scott on (0233) 625581.

For Sale: ZX Spectrum 48K with Sega Emperor keyboard, fitted Multiface One and Wafadrive, over 100 software and utilities, tape recorder, Kempston interface and Quickshot Turbo joystick, £170 ono. Phone 0947 841077 after 6pm.

Spectrum games for sale. Full price games e.g. Zynaps, Starstrike II, Enduro Racer, Empire Strikes Back, for £3.00. Budget games 50p. Send SAE for full list. Clive Billington, 12 Mere Close, Newport, Shropshire. Telephone 0952 813401.

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Poverty forces me to sell loadsa – rad, trendy, hip-hop games inc. Batman, Ikari Warriors, Tracksuit Manager etc. Send an SAE to South Lodge, Insch, Aberdeenshire AB5 6RJ or tel (0464) 20687 after 6pm.

Spectrum games, American comics, British comics, TV and Film merchandise and army stuff. Ask for the list or lists you're interested in. Please send SAE to: Lee Shard, 15 Randall St., Maidstone, Kent ME14 2TB.

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FANZINES

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THE SGM is a fantastic guide that helps you design your own games, it's easy when you know how. Just send £1.00 chq/PO payable to Steven Sandhu, 142 Brook Street, Erith, Kent DA8 1JA.

MISCELLANEOUS

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"THIEF" – brand new Spectrum graphic/text adventure. Includes 20 semi-intelligent characters, 20 excellent pictures, large user-friendly vocabulary. Specially compacted code. Send £2.99 to Corrupt Code, 1 McDonagh Avenue, Mervue, Galway, Ireland.

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THE FORM

CHARTS

FAVOURITE GAME ....

FAVOURITE MUSIC **48K/128K**

FAVOURITE VIDEO ....

Each month we compile three charts: top computer games, top computer music and top video films. So, why not take part in the most accurate way of finding out what everybody's playing – not just hype-filled sales charts! So get those entries in as soon as possible. Any ridiculously old games will not be dealt with favourably.

SCORES

GAME 1 ....

....

GAME 2 ....

....

GAME 3 ....

....

Next to each chart-topping game we also print a score to aim for. This score is calculated (very mathematically) with the aid of Phil King's computer. The person nearest to the target score of the month will get their name and score printed in the corresponding issue of CRASH. Now, it's impossible to cheat! (We hope . . .)

THE INFO

Filled in the voting bit? Well, now all you have to do is fill in all the required information below, cut-out – or photocopy – your didactic (LMLWD) votes and send them to: **The Form, CRASH Towers, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB**.

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SUPERTRUX

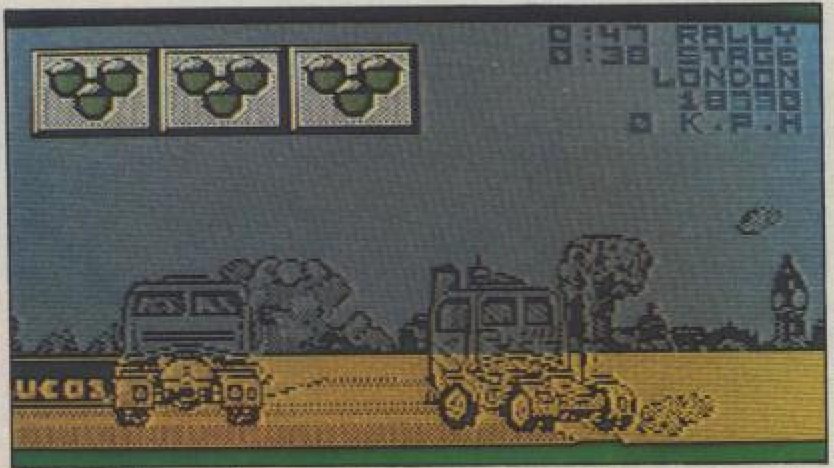
Producer **Elite**
Squashed hedgehogs **£7.99 cass**
£12.99 disk
Author **Gargoyle Games**

● *A normal drive down the M1*

Juggernauts are often seen zooming uncontrollably down the motorway (and through Ludlow's cobbled lanes), jack-knifing and causing pile-ups. So perhaps it's not too surprising that people with a taste for danger (Mike Smith etc) like to race them.

However, instead of racing round Silverstone, you're travelling across Europe. Starting in London and heading first for either Paris or Brussels, depending on which route is taken at junctions. Obviously the Channel Tunnel has already been built – you drive straight from England to the Continent. Further racing takes you to other European capitals.

At the side of the undulating track are huge advertising hoardings. Contact with these or other trucks brings you to a grinding halt, eating into a very strict time limit. If more than a couple of small mistakes are made, you won't reach the end of the stage.



▲ Just taking a spin

MIKE I'm a great fan of racing games, but I don't think I'll be coming back to *Supertrux*. We've seen it all before, and much better. The hills work nicely as a graphic effect, but they make the gameplay incredibly frustrating. You can't see the down-side of a hill when coming up it, so inevitably there are always a couple of trucks waiting to hit you on the other side! The edges of the track are different from the usual in that you can't go over them; the slightest contact sends you skidding all over the place – not a particularly pleasing feature. All in all, *Supertrux* is a frustrating, poor version of a prehistoric idea. Give it a miss (a big one).

46%

The fast-scrolling track is impressive, although all sections of the race look alike. But what really disappoints is the lack of gameplay variety – all there is to do is avoid the other trucks. The only original feature are the junctions. Otherwise, *Supertrux* is exceptionally ordinary.

PHIL 59%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: fast-scrolling 3-D track
Sound: simple engine noises
Options: definable keys
General rating: a run-of-the-mill race game

Presentation	65%
Graphics	67%
Sound	36%
Playability	60%
Addictive qualities	52%

OVERALL 52%

MOTOR MASSACRE

● *We'd rather eat Slu*

Producer **Gremlin**
Road tax **£7.99 cass**
£12.99 disk
Author **Sentient**

After a biological holocaust, food is in short supply. So mad scientist Dr A Noid invents Slu – the ultimate junk food, addictive and *very* bad for you. But, unlike in real life, Dr A Noid is not rewarded by a chain of fast food restaurants, instead he is to be assassinated by you!

Driving your All Terrain Vehicle around three towns, you can drive into buildings and explore them on foot, collecting useful objects and avoiding mutants. Collected food parcels can be swapped at gas stations for weapons, ammunition and fuel.

An entry pass must also be found to enter the Arena, a circuit high above the ground. Here, the idea is to ram other cars over the edge while avoiding a similar fate. Surviving takes you to the next town. At the end of the third Arena, you may finally take on Dr A Noid himself.

Sounds interesting? Well, it is my unfortunate duty to inform you that *Motor Massacre* is an awful game. The main problem is the infuriating multiload – when your sole life is lost, a whole section must be reloaded. Graphics are simplistic and blocky, while the hero walks as if battling against a hurricane!

PHIL The basic concept is interesting, so it's a shame it's been so poorly implemented. Sound is weak, and the graphics are a mess. Wobbly sprites stagger around garishly coloured screens: red and white – yuk!. This untidiness carries through to the gameplay. Searching buildings is uneventful, while driving sections are only marginally more interesting. The sole challenge appears in the Arena section – but with only one life you're almost certain to die. Any further interest in the game is killed stone dead by the appalling multiload system.

28%

Gremlin have produced some good games in their time; sadly this is isn't one of them.

MARK 31%

▼ A colour scheme to drive anyone round the bend



THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: the car looks like it's going backwards and the colour schemes are appalling
Sound: Quick grandma, fetch my hearing aid!
Options: definable keys
General rating: a good idea let down by awful programming

Presentation	36%
Graphics	29%
Sound	25%
Playability	34%
Addictive qualities	27%

OVERALL 29%

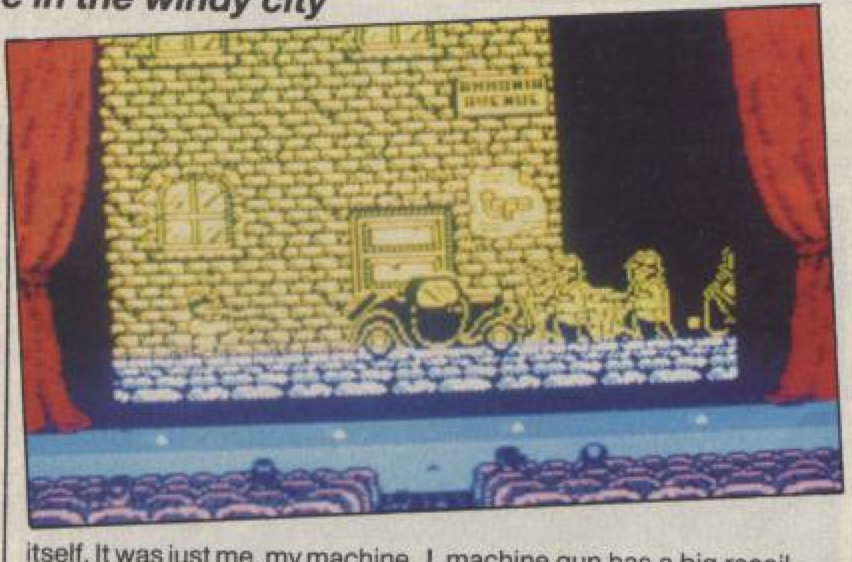


● *Blowing away crime in the windy city*

Producer **US Gold**
Violin cases **£8.99 cass**
£12.99 disk
Author **Toposoft**

NICK **Funny accents, violin cases and dames at the ready – the gangsters are in town in *Chicago 30's*. It's another of those 'shooty shooty' games where the idea is mass slaughter of everything on screen. Great attention has been given to the detail in the graphics and all the sprites are animated well, but unfortunately the screens are mainly monochrome with a colourful border. There is some pretty good sound in there though, with a pleasing tune at the start and a few in-game effects to jolly things along. The main let-down is the lack of variety in the gameplay: just walking along, shooting all the gangsters. However, the game does pick up a bit when you get in the car, and despite a few flaws, it's an action-packed shoot-'em-up.**

82%



The 1930s were tough the world over, but Chicago had it roughest. While the rich ate off gold plates, most people stood in line at the soup kitchens. Enough to drive you to drink you say? Well maybe, but it was Prohibition then and alcohol was banned. Being on the border with Canada, smuggling whisky into Chicago was easy.

Prohibition was a dumb idea, but the smugglers' brutality was legendary – no wonder the cops kept out of their way. That was, until I announced I'd raid a warehouse packed with alcohol. The press even printed my route – through the port, city outskirts, city centre then the warehouse itself. It was just me, my machine gun and a few sticks of dynamite against hundreds of hoodlums.

Starting off in the port, there were two levels to walk along. But gun-toting gangsters were popping out from behind crates all over the place. If I wanted to stay alive I had to keep moving. Unfortunately the Thompson machine gun has a big recoil, firing meant I had to stand still. It's a big gun too, so even when I got in my sleek Chevrolet firing meant I had to stick my head out – risking getting it blown off.

Nowadays of course, it's just entertainment for people. The goody gets shot and people leave the cinema – if everyone leaves the movie's over. Myself, I like the gangster movies. The actors look real good, especially the baddies, even if they move a little stiffly. The backgrounds are great too, with enough detail that the lack of colour hardly matters. *Chicago 30's* is a lot like some of the shoot-'em-up scenes in that *RoboCop* movie, and while it lacks the variety of that game, it's faster, harder and generally well worth the price of admission.

STUART 82%

BEAT THE BOOZE

- Progress is easier on the top level of the play area.
- Shoot the gangsters before they have a chance to shoot back.
- In the car, don't fire unless it's safe to pop your head out of the window!

I must admit I'm a fan of old gangster movies and I often watch *The Untouchables* (don't mention that! – Danielle) on TV. So I relished the chance to bump off a few mobsters myself. And I'm glad to say I'm not disappointed; *Chicago 30's* is a very playable shoot-'em-up. Okay, so the action is very similar to that in *RoboCop*, but at least you don't have to worry about limited ammo. And a great atmosphere is created by the detailed backdrops – they're monochromatic, but then so are the old films! I especially like the clever cinema screen effect. *Chicago 30's* combines great presentation with addictive gameplay. You certainly don't need to be drunk to enjoy it!

PHIL 83%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: detailed and atmospheric
Sound: fair title tune, in-game shooting effects
General rating: Chicago in the 30s was not a nice place to live, but it makes a great game setting

Presentation	84%
Graphics	83%
Sound	60%
Playability	83%
Addictive qualities	81%
OVERALL	**82%**

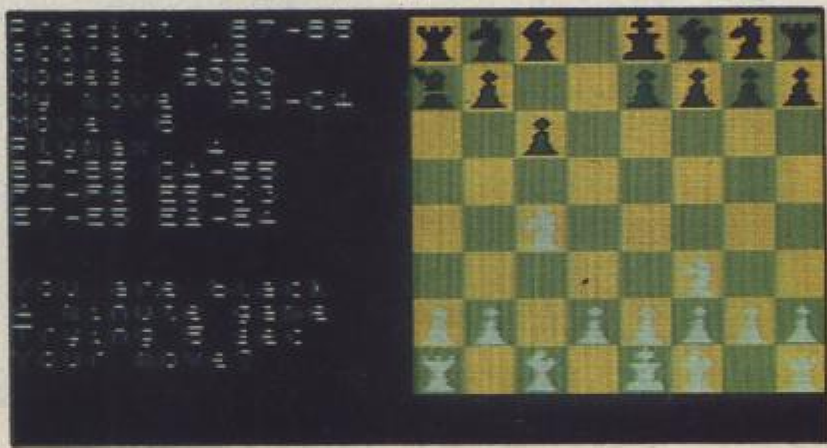


Classic Games 4

● *Classic games for . . . the bin*

Producer **CP Software**
Out of pocket **£9.95 cass**

Not only are all the games here based on some very ancient entertainment, but their actual programming is, by Spectrum terms, virtually prehistoric – ie pre-CRASH. The four games are draughts, backgammon, chess and bridge. The first of these has recently been well-implemented in Rack-It's *Draughts Genius*. By comparison this version, originating in 1982, is unsurprisingly simple in its presentation with neither two-player, reset or take-back-move options. Not being a great draughts player myself, I was unable to ascertain how well the computer was playing (there is no two-player mode). On easy level I had few problems, whereas on Level 9 I gave up – each computer move takes around 25 minutes!



The compilation's version of chess, *Superchess 3.5*, is more modern, being written in 1985, but still lacks the more refined options of recent games. Nevertheless, it plays a fair game and you can limit its thinking time to anything from 5 to 9999 seconds, although I wouldn't fancy waiting for two-and-three-quarter hours for the computer to make a move!

CP's *Backgammon* is also showing its age (1983) with simplistic, character block graphics and dull presentation. It doesn't even manage to adhere to the rules: it allows more than five counters on a single point – an illegal move in the board game. Moreover the real skill behind backgammon is in knowing when to double the stake, and this is not catered for. Lacking a two-player mode, it soon gets tedious.

Quite clearly the most entertaining game here is *Bridge Player III*. Again, only one player can take on the computer, but even though it's almost three-years-old, it plays a mean game and is adequately presented for a card game. Both bidding and playing sections are well-implemented. The only problem is that if you can't play bridge you're in trouble: no instructions are given on how to play – the inlay recommends you to get a book from the library!

In conclusion, four extremely old games for a tenner doesn't seem a very good deal, especially when only one of the games (bridge) is competently represented. If I were you, I'd buy a pack of cards, a draughts/chess board and a backgammon set – much better value for money.

PHIL KING

OVERALL 34%

CLOCK CHESS '89

Producer **CP Software**
Out of pocket **£9.95 cass**
£14.95 disk
Author **Chris Whittington**

● ***A real roasting for chess nuts!***

Clock Chess '89 may be unlikely to trouble Gary Kasparov, but it claims to be 'probably the world's strongest 8-bit chess program' and also to reach 'those parts that other other chess programs cannot'. While such lager ad slogans might cast doubt on its seriousness, an endorsement by UK chess champion Mike Basman, together with a detailed manual suggest it isn't, in fact, a joke.

Originally a PCW disk-based program, the Spectrum game comes in two versions, 48K cassette and +3 disk. Both are inferior to the original PCW version, according to the makers. The 48K game has additional limitations: a smaller opening library and no 3-D display option, in-game text has been cut forcing heavier reliance on the manual, a special problem-solving facility is deleted, no save/load option and the 'Take back move' has been limited to ten moves. While we reviewed the disk version, the 48K game still looks pretty formidable.

Clock Chess is promoted as the most powerful such program around. It claims to have a library of opening moves of 32,000 bytes; understand all the rules of chess (including underpromotion, draw by repetition); intelligently search potential moves, and to have beaten all its potential competitors during its development. Interestingly, during play it will display what moves it's considering, and even predict what your move will be if you want.

At the start of the game you can select Easy play, have the computer Match your thinking time, rigidly limit the computer to a set number of minutes/seconds per turn, play against the clock or have it Supervise two human players. There are also special options to play 'blindfolded' with one or both sides invisible and select how 'desirable' a draw is for the computer. Once in the game you can make the program play your next move; display previous moves; take back moves, and have the game self-play.

The Easy game is refreshingly fast and I even came close to victory, until defeated by the repetition rule. Harder levels require more thinking time and are much more challenging. We tried the game against *Colossus 4 Chess* – which it is claimed to be superior to. We set both programs 30 seconds thinking time, but the latter program usually took longer and, perhaps because of this, narrowly won. For the beginner the more serious drawback is the lack of any joystick control, other than cursor and, even sillier, no letters/numbers on the board's edges to make obvious the chess notation.

In conclusion this is a respectable addition to the ranks of the chess programs and is worth serious consideration from all enthusiasts. Other gamesplayers should give it a look, but mediocre presentation is unlikely to attract too many new converts.

STUART WYNNE

OVERALL 62%

▼ **Looking for a mate**



Reviews



ROCK-STAR Ate my hamster

● ***Nick scoffed our* Ratatouille!**

Producer **Code Masters**
Record royalties **£9.99 cass, £12.99 disk**
Author **Colin Jones**

Bad vibes man, how was I supposed to know it was a hamster? My manager gave me this nice chunky sandwich for lunch, and life as a rock star is hungry work. Okay, so it did taste a bit furry, but I just thought the bread had gone mouldy! The next thing I know, the story's plastered all over the front pages of the tabloids.

Oh well, there's no such thing as bad publicity – that's what my manager reckons. And he should know, he's made me almost as rich as himself by knowing when to go on tour or release the new single. He makes the decisions round here, even arranging neat publicity stunts, although the ones in which I die are pretty naff!

Going on tour is my favourite thing: when I was a nobody, I played in pubs and clubs. Now I'm a superstar, I play in concert halls and huge stadiums and sell thousands of chart-topping records, promoted by ultra-expensive videos, featuring mud-wrestling girls with whips etc.

Life as a rock star is fun. But even though he's made me rich, I don't think my manager does an awful lot – he just makes simple, multiple choice decisions. And although he's a good laugh at times, I don't think he's really worth the dough.

PHIL 58%

MARK **Ever wanted to manage your own pop group? Well after playing *Rock Star Ate My Hamster* any such tendencies will probably be completely squashed. Sorry, Code Masters, only kidding – this is great. What other game gives you the chance to manage groups with names such as The Non-Stop Alien Space Group and Rusty Baubles?! We are talking major weirdness here. But it was the newspaper headlines that really cracked me up. So rush down to your local computer store and buy *Rock Star Ate My Hamster*, if only for the silly title.**

82%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Sinclair
Graphics: some well-drawn static pictures
Sound: some decent music
Options: manage up to four stars, chosen from a total of over 40
General rating: a simple, but highly amusing music management game

Presentation	77%
Graphics	75%
Sound	76%
Playability	74%
Addictive qualities	64%
OVERALL	**70%**



SUPERMAN™ THE MAN OF STEEL

● ***Clark Kent changes his clothes***

Producer **Tynesoft**
Change of underwear **£7.95 cass £14.95 disk**
Authors **Mike Talbot and Tim McCarthy**

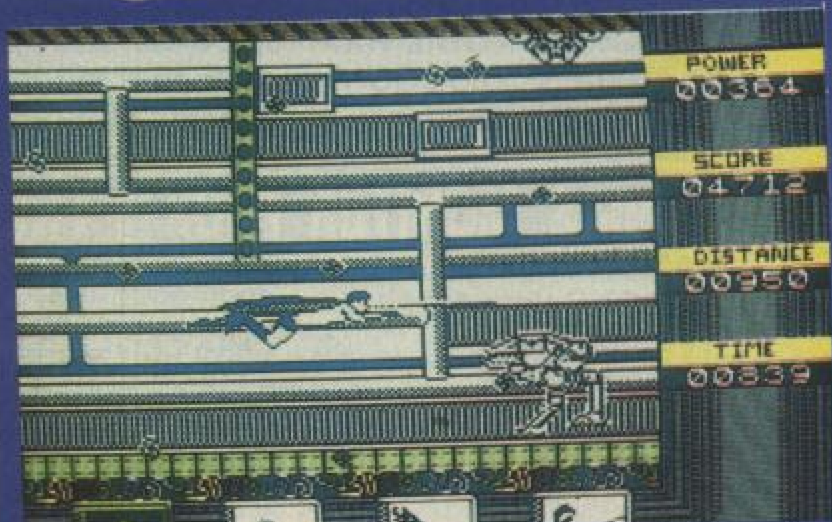
It's enough to make even a grown superhero cry; first Christopher Reeves buzzes off to be a 'serious actor', then the horrendous *Superboy* appears, and worst of all I've got a demeaning job with Tynesoft.

My Tynesoft adventure starts at STAR laboratories, where Professor Corwin informs me that unusual seismic disturbances have been recorded across the Earth, threatening the whole planet. He must go to the STAR Lab Satellite to gather further data, so he asks me to escort his space shuttle. I must protect it from floating asteroids – these can't hurt me, but contact with shards of kryptonite temporarily disables my superpowers.

Once the satellite is reached, I must deactivate its security system. Then it's outside again to biff more asteroids before flying to the Lexcorp satellite; the apparent cause of the disaster. Fighting off defence robots, I must destroy a geo-disrupter in the satellite's core to save the Earth yet again.

Superman is one of my favourite comic heroes, but Tynesoft have really messed this licence up. Superman himself looks like a matchstick figure as he walks along the horizontally-scrolling sections. Gameplay is further ruined by an annoying multiload system. The best feature is a handy cheat mode, so you don't have to play the game!

MARK 38%



▲ Breaking the record for superpowered flight

PHIL Is it a cassette? Is it a computer game? No, it's a load of crap! Honestly, I can't believe how such a good licence could be made so bad. Although Superman is immortal (due to DC Comics' insistence), every time he fails you must reload the first leval. This would just about be tolerable if the gameplay was anything to shout about. Sadly, it's not, and neither are the simple graphics. About the only thing *Superman* has going for it is a decent rendition of the famous thema tune.

32%

THE ESSENTIALS

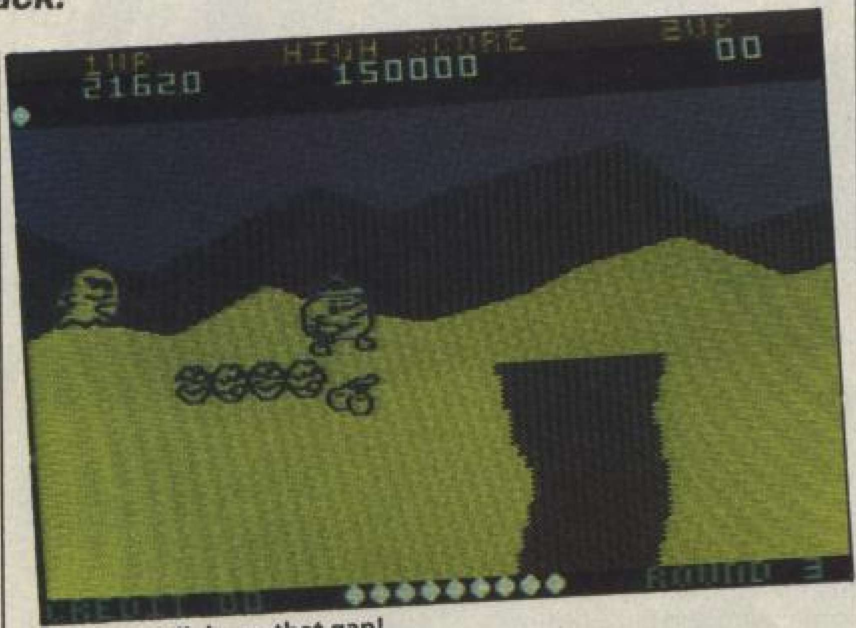
Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: a 'matchstick' Superman
Sound: good title tune
General rating: there's nothing at all super about it

Presentation	40%
Graphics	38%
Sound	67%
Playability	37%
Addictive qualities	32%
OVERALL	**35%**

PAC-LAND

● ***The pill-popper's back!***

Producer **Grandslam**
Fruit and pills **£8.95 cass**
£12.95 disk
Author **Steve Marsden**



▲ **Don't fall down that gap!**

After being inflated into full 3-D for *Pac-Mania* (82%, Issue 59), everyone's favourite pill-popper has now grown legs and arms! After using these to finally escape his famous haunted mazes he returns back home to the island of Pac-Land. Pac's never been one for the quiet life though, and when he happens on a lost fairy he resolves to take it home to Fairyland.

But no sooner than Pac sets off on his trip, the ghosts Blinky, Pinky, Inky and Clyde are on his trail. Having never been pill-poppers they haven't suffered Pac's limb-growing side effects, but that doesn't stop them driving cars and piloting planes. Once again Pac is on the run, this time across a flick-screen landscape – jumping fire hydrants and tree trunks, but not the ghosts who float upwards to gobble him up.

Pac's trip to Fairyland will take him through four sections, including a town, forests, desert and a mountain pass with moving platforms. As one would expect of Pac-Land there's plenty of food to gobble for extra points and quite a few power pills – so you can eat up the ghosts for a change. But all this exertion is tiring, and if your energy runs out you lose a life.

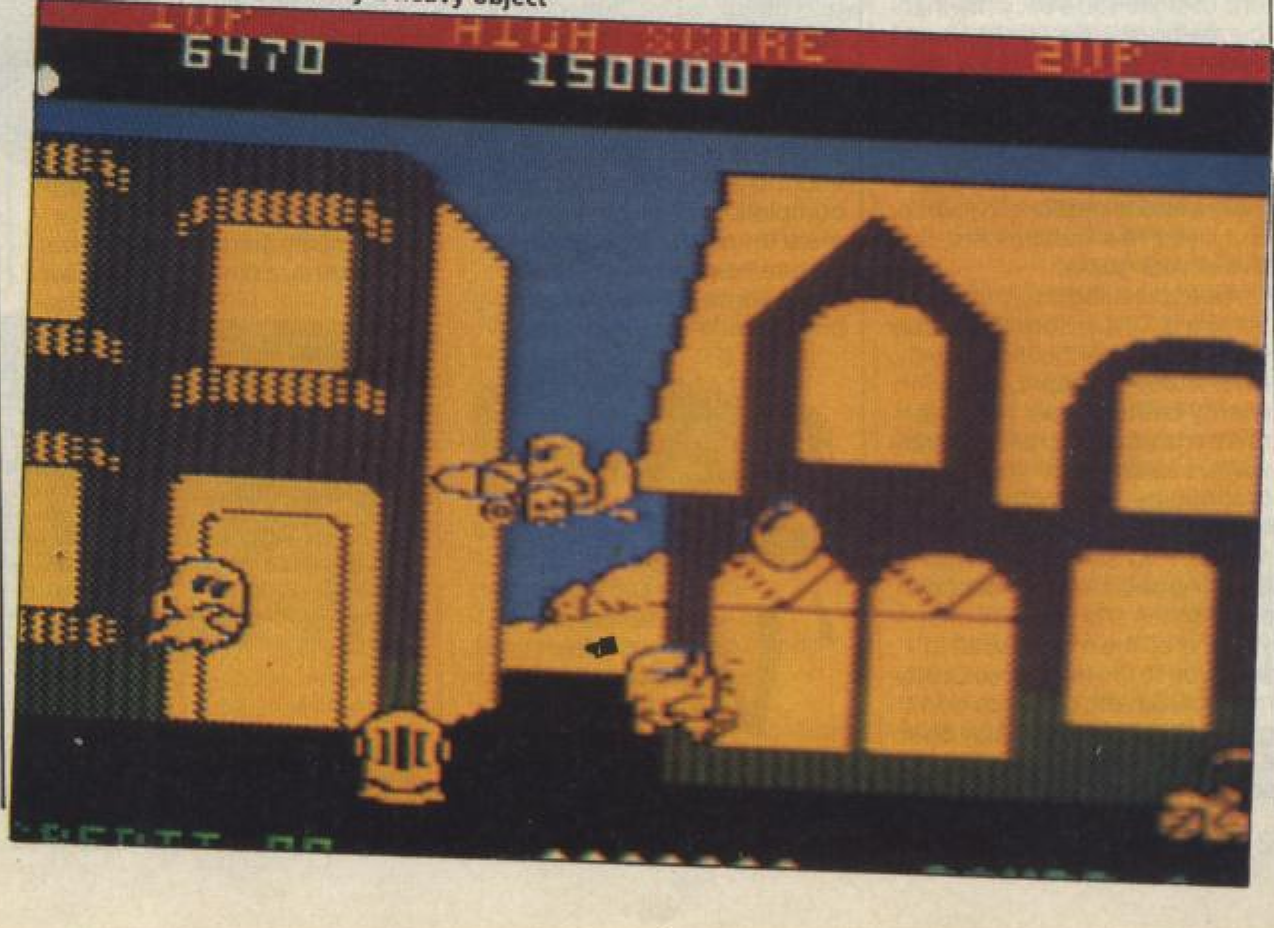
The rotund Pac has undoubtably won a special place in most gamesplayers hearts and has starred in some excellent coin-ops, *Pac–Land* being one of them. It's a pity, then, that the conversion is so poor. After some pretty neat scrolling of an isometric landscape in *Pac–Mania*, Grandslam now have the gall to offer a bland, totally colourless game with a flick-screen technique which severely limits the playability. Then there's the weird credit system – you can select up to a hundred credits but they don't give you extra lives! For the character alone it's fun to play for a while, but with no colour, no scrolling, and no Fairyland sequence this is a bit of an insult.

MARK 63%

MIKE ***Pac-Land*** **is one of the most gorgeously endearing games I've seen in ages! The sound is excellent; a catchy (annoyingly so!) tune plays throughout. As happens so often, it gets a bit garbled when the spot FX try and play at the same time, but this is a minor point. The graphics are great – the monochrome is a bit of a disappointment, but the well-animated characters and equally attractive backgrounds more than make up for it. Playability, though, is Pac-Land's real strength. Varied levels and entertaining presentation all add to a jolly good basic game.**

84%

▼ **Ouch! Pac's been hit by a heavy object**



THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: monochromatic but characterful
Sound: catchy 128K in-game tune
Options: one or two players
General rating: Pac fans will love it, but others probably won't

Presentation	79%
Graphics	73%
Sound	80%
Playability	78%
Addictive qualities	75%

OVERALL 73%

BUDGET BUREAU

1.99

A mixed bunch of new budget games arrived from **Silverbird** this month, of which the most original is ***Pasteman Pat*** (65%). In this devious picture puzzle game, Pat Splatt has to use his paste brush to assemble a large wall poster from the squares which Nasty Norville has jumbled up (they resemble an *SU* poster!). It sounds easy enough, but on the most difficult levels you're likely to get a headache sorting dozens of small squares, while inaccurate brushwork by the hero causes frustration. Add to this the extra problems caused by a time limit and the objects thrown by Norville's henchmen (they knock Pat off his ladder!) and you have one challenging game. But if you're a wallpapering fan, this is your game.

Also splashing down from Silverbird is ***Turbo Boat Simulator*** (32%), a nautical (but not very nice) shoot-'em-up. Lost in enemy territory, your boat patrols horizontally-scrolling waterways, searching for map parts dropped by allied planes (why can't the pillocks drop a whole map?!). Play simply involves avoiding and shooting enemy submarines and missiles until you find all the map pieces to send you to the next level. Grotty monochromatic graphics don't give much incentive to play on in a game about as exciting as squashed hedgehog racing. Its best feature is definitely the 128K title tune.

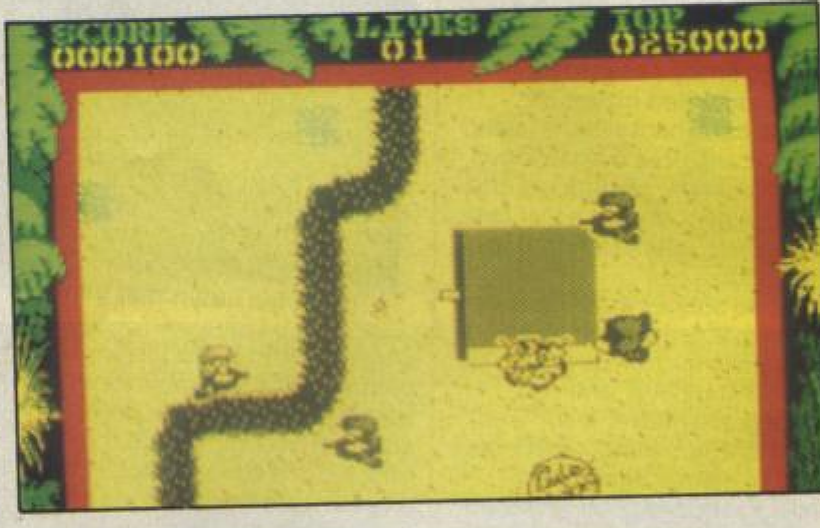
Skateboard Joust (30%) is another disappointing Silverbird effort, featuring very primitive graphics and minimal sound. Gameplay is reminiscent of the ancient jousting game, *Ostron*. But here you have a hovering skateboard and must destroy opponents by jumping up to let your board fly into them! The trendy sport of skateboarding has been over-used of late, and this off-beat implementation provides little excitement. Even Nick 'rad lad' Roberts quickly lost interest (but not his cool).

Just as dull is **Players**' unoriginal beat-'em-up, ***Street Gang*** (24%). Strolling through eight New York streets, you are attacked by all manner of punks and thugs, some of them wielding machine guns. The bad news is that despite the presence of many foes, progress is surprisingly easy. This is especially so when you discover that by continuously jumping to the right, completion of all eight levels is a mere formality. This amazing feature helps to make *Street Gang* about as eventful as a monks' wife-swapping party.

2.99

'Who dares wins' is **Code Masters**' favourite motto. After all, they've dared to sell some pretty dire software at times, yet made a fortune in the process. True to their adventurous spirit, they've come up with ***SAS Combat Simulator*** (71%) (neat title, lads!). The good news is that this is one of their better releases. Most of the action is depicted by some decent overhead-view graphics, with your little soldier shooting and grenading swarming enemies. Starting on foot, he can find an armoured jeep and a tank to drive while he blasts or runs over enemy soldiers, and blows even trains to smithereens. After reaching the end of a stage, play switches to a side-view hand-to-hand combat section, with yet more soldiers for the violent hero to punch. Unfortunately this section is both repetitive and irritating as near-perfect timing is needed to dispatch countless foes. Even so, *SAS Combat Simulator* is a challenging shoot-'em-up with plenty of content.

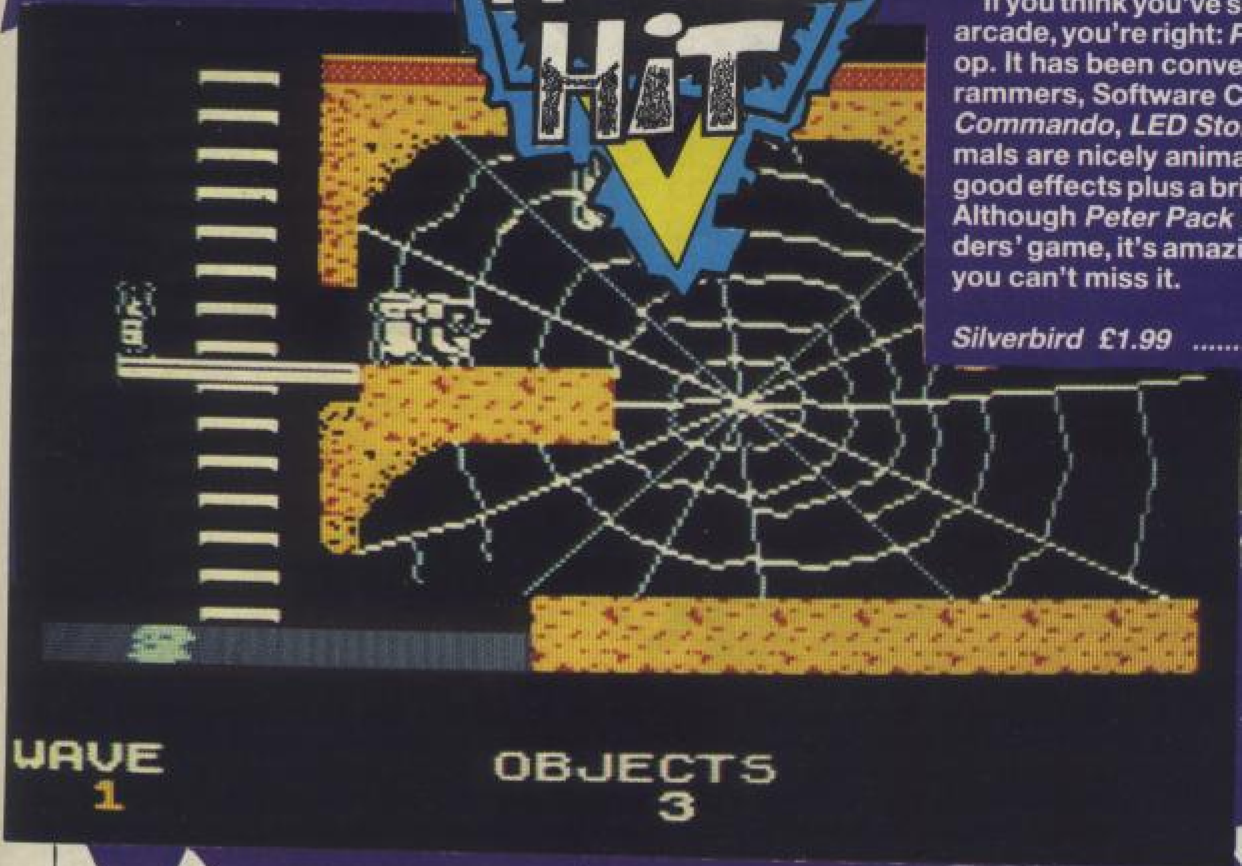
But there are some places even the SAS would fear to tread. The murky depths of the Atlantic are home for many a deadly shark, and also the setting for ***Titanic*** (45%) from **Kixx**. To reach the famous shipwreck, your diver must negotiate a network of underwater caves infested with a variety of vicious sea creatures. Annoyingly, running out of oxygen sends the diver right back to the start, although I can't understand how he'd survive anyway – the water pressure at such depths would be enough to squash him flat! Nevertheless, survive he does to witness primitive graphics and gameplay inferior to Durell's ancient *Scuba Dive*. Cartographers will no doubt enjoy exploring and mapping the large cave system, but I found the whole exercise rather dull.



Set in the equally dangerous world of the Roman Empire, Kixx's ***Colosseum*** (70%) is all about chariot racing. But this isn't exactly a sport to take up for







HOUSE HIT

Rodents have often made it to the top in showbiz (Mickey Mouse, Roland Rat, Esther Rantzen etc), but *Peter Pack Rat* is far too busy collecting things to bother about fame. He just loves to hoard items of minimalistic art: namely old bottles and cans from his local junkyard. However, nasty Riff Rat is out to get Peter – perhaps he's also a closet junk-collector! And Riff is not alone: Peter's long list of enemies includes dogs, cats, spiders, owls, bats, snakes, and even an alligator – is this guy popular or what?!

While avoiding these baddies, Peter must collect a set number of treasures within the time limit, and take them back to his nest. The cute furry rodent is an agile little fellow, climbing ladders, jumping across gaps and sliding down chutes and pipes. They say there's nothing quite so vicious as a rat backed into a corner, and in tight situations Peter can throw collected stones at his assailants. This stuns them for a while (I'm not surprised; have you ever seen a rat throwing stones?!), and also allows Peter to be carried by dazed bats and birds, until they decide to drop him! When Pete has collected all the 'treasure' from the junkyard, he can look for more in the sewer and up a tree.

If you think you've seen something like this in your local arcade, you're right: *Peter Pack Rat* is an old Tengen coin-op. It has been converted to the Spectrum by ace programmers, Software Creations (*Bubble Bobble, Bionic Commando, LED Storm*), and it shows. The various animals are nicely animated, while sound is even better; good effects plus a brilliant 'whistling' 128K in-game tune. Although *Peter Pack Rat* is a simple 'platform and ladders' game, it's amazingly addictive. For a mere two quid, you can't miss it.

Silverbird £1.99 .... *85%*

health reasons. The drivers are equipped with weapons, and the winner is the sole survivor at the end of the race! As Benurio, wrongly-accused of treason (you were on holiday at the time), you must prove your innocence by winning a chariot race (this is almost as strange as British justice!). Racing round the oval track, obstacles must be avoided, while you hack away at other drivers with your axe. If a driver is killed, you take his weapon even if it is less powerful than your present one. The action is fast and furious, albeit very repetitive. Although the sprites are simple, the track is fast-scrolling, and the perspective for the bends is ingenious: the viewpoint follows the chariot round. Despite a very simple concept, *Colosseum* is surprisingly addictive.

But it's back to the future for ***The Hit Squad*** (70%) from Code Masters. In post-apocalypse 2125, evil Emilio Bocker rules the city of Los Angeles with an iron grip. Something must be done, so you decide to search the city for Bocker's hidden lair. But who are you? Well, when the game starts you can choose to be one of four different streetfighters, such as stealthy Stak and 'sexy Xena'! Exploring twelve parts of the city simply involves jumping around platforms, shooting nasties while searching for teleport and weapon disks. But the action is well-portrayed by large, colourful graphics, while the digitised title picture of the four fighters is particularly impressive.

Another playable Code Masters release is ***Fast Food*** (68%). Despite the strange moniker, this is actually a souped-up version of *Pac-Man*! The hero, however, resembles that old egghead, Dizzy. Hamburgers chase the oval hero around many mazes, while he tries to eat all the other food. Special abilities may be obtained, including burger-eating, by collecting various objects. What really disappoints is the pedestrian pace at which the action takes place. But amusing, animated screens every three levels provide an incentive to keep playing. The neat presentation is improved further on 128K machines by the inclusion of a neat in-game tune.

However, even decent presentation would do little to improve Cult's dire ***Soccer Star*** (28%). This football management game is about as unrealistic as you can get. Firstly, there are only eight teams per division. But worse still, you are only allowed to buy and sell players at the beginning of the season: so if your team is rubbish, you're stuck with it! Match presentation is equally poor, consisting mainly of a ball wobbling along a line – this is meant to represent 'the balance of the match'! The goalmouth action is slightly better but is hardly exciting. With such limited options and poor presentation, *Soccer Star* is a sure candidate for relegation.

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ROCK STAR

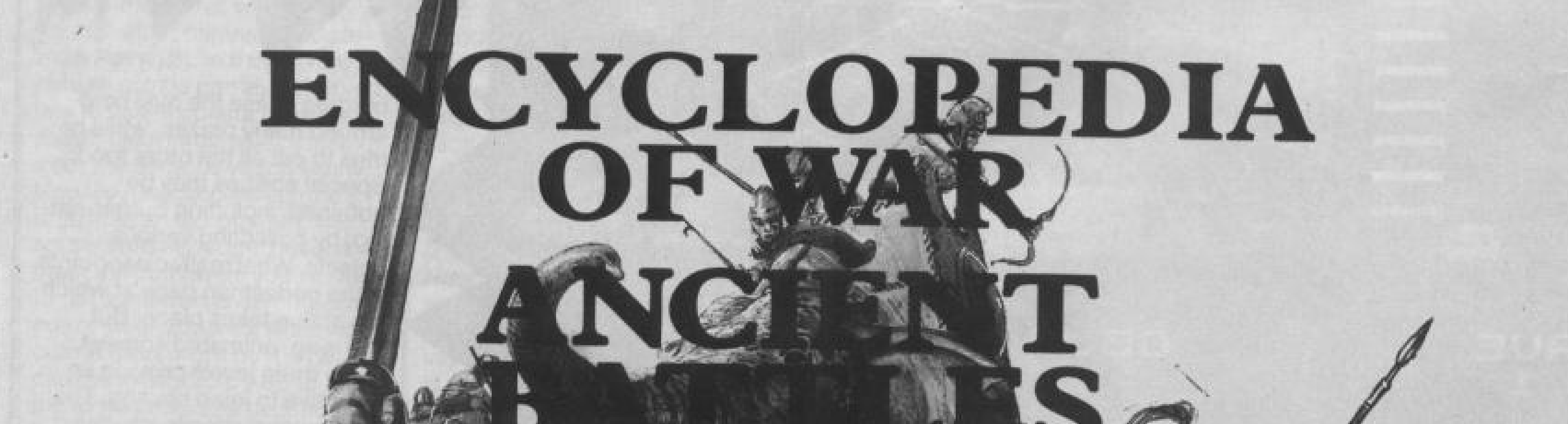


Could you manage this Rock Star ?

Code Masters GOLD

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Available from W.H. Smith, John Menzies, Virgin Stores and all good computer shops, or mail order from CCS Ltd, 14 Langton Way, London SE3 7TL. Tel: 01-985 7232.

Professional SOCCER

MARK I'm not normally one for football management games, but *Professional Soccer* has kept me glued to screen for ages. The menus are so easy to use, allowing fast access to an impressive range of options. Match presentation is also fine with some good (for the genre) graphics – an improvement on *Tracksuit Manager* which I quickly lost interest in due to its extremely dull match portrayal. Realism is heightened by the fact that every player has his own information file, giving all relevant details. So if you're a disgruntled Walsall fan, or just a typical armchair critic, *Professional Soccer* gives you the chance to find out what a hard job managing a football team really is. So get off Bobby Robson's back!

MARK 73%

● ***Phil King for England manager!***

Producer **Tough Games/CRL**
New balls **£8.95 cass**
Authors **David Leitch and K Brice**



▲ Selecting players for the next match

Oh woe is me, Leicester City are stuck in the Second Division. When will they return to their former glory? (Whenever was that?! – Lloyd). The top of the First Division is surely where they belong. Oh well, all I can do is dream – or is it?

One of the best things about football management games is that they allow supporters of lowly clubs to see if they could do any better at managing their favourite team. *Professional Soccer* is the latest in a long line of similar games, allowing you to lead a team from the third division to promotion and success in the FA Cup.

Selected from a list of League sides, your team starts with 16 players of varying skill. Each has attributes for defence, midfield and attacking abilities. Defenders and attackers also have a preference for playing either in the middle of the pitch or wide. Before each match, eleven players plus a substitute must be selected from the squad. These can play in any one of eight strategic formations. Some of these are geared for defensive play (such as 5-3-2) while others suit an attacking style (3-2-5).

When you're satisfied with the team, it's time to start the match. While nothing much is happening in the game, the screen simply displays the two team line-ups, the time elapsed and the score. Messages appear from time to time, informing you that a player has been booked etc. But once one of the teams mounts an attack, the screen switches to an overhead view of the goalmouth to show the relevant action. And if you're getting thrashed ten nil or one of your players is injured, you can always send on the substitute.

When the final whistle is blown, the rest of the division's results appear one by one, and are followed by the resultant league table. After every few league matches your team also gets to play in the FA Cup, where they could meet one the really big teams like Liverpool (or even Leicester!).

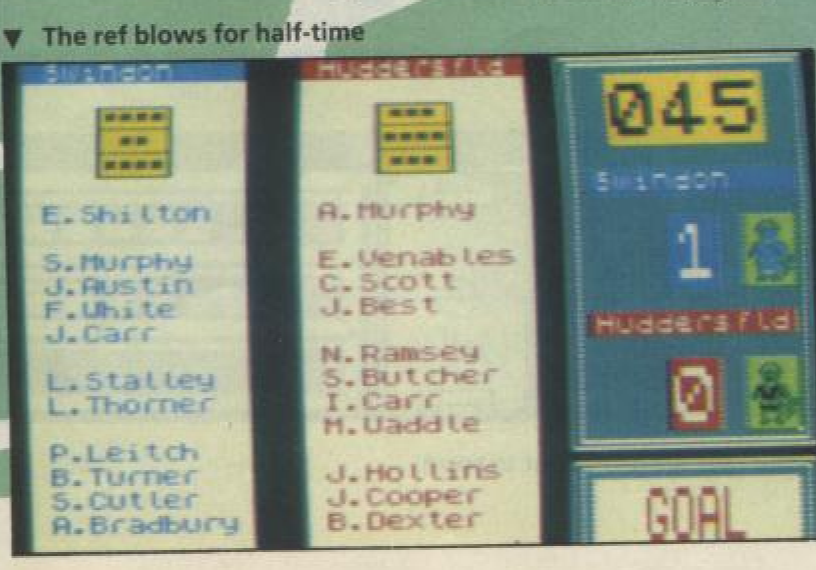
Between matches, players may be bought and sold in order to strengthen your squad. A list of forthcoming fixtures can also be viewed. Financial control is thankfully limited to buying and selling players – there's nothing more boring than balancing books.

The wide range of options offered is enough to give adequate control of the club without slowing the game to a grinding halt. Fluent play is also aided by the neat menu-driven selection system which is a pleasure to use.

Following the recent *Football Manager II* (79%, Issue 54) and *Tracksuit Manager* (70%, Issue 56), yet another football management game is a bit much (even for me). But *Professional Soccer* offers an impressive range of team options, and is competently programmed with some decent graphics to boot. The fine presentation and easy-to-use menu system help to preserve the undoubted lasting appeal of this absorbing management simulation.

PHIL 78%

▼ The ref blows for half-time



THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: not quite up to *Match Day II* standards, but better than those in *Football Manager II*
Sound: simple beeps
Options: definable keys, graphics on/off
General rating: a fine football management game with plenty of lasting appeal

Presentation	70%
Graphics	41%
Sound	20%
Playability	71%
Addictive qualities	81%
OVERALL	**76%**

Gary Lineker's HOTSHOT

● *'Ere we go again . . .*

Producer Gremlin
Goals scored £7.99 cass
£12.99 disk
Authors Gaz (code), Jon (graphics), Benn (sound)

'Ere we go, 'ere we go, er . . . I can't remember the rest of the lyrics! And Lineker has scored – a nice looking bird she is too! However, Gary gets most of his kicks on the football pitch, wearing an England jersey and occasionally hitting the back of the net (if someone pushes him in!).

But on with the game . . . *Gary Lineker's Hotshot* allows you to control any of 16 national sides. However, this isn't the World Cup – the teams are in a league of four divisions. Two players may also play a 'friendly', while other options allow game time and computer team intelligence to be altered.

Matches are shown from directly overhead, the huge pitch scrolling to follow the ball. As in most footy sims, you control the nearest player to the ball. If none of your players are on-screen, an arrow shows the direction of the nearest one. Once in possession, dribbling is automatic, although going backwards without first rotating leaves the ball behind.

Various types of kick (including overhead) can be performed by moving the joystick as fire is pressed (shot power is determined by how long the fire button is held down). Pressing fire when not in possession makes the player do a sliding tackle. But if the timing isn't quite right, you can easily foul an opposing player, resulting in a free kick (even inside the penalty area!). Persistent fouling results in a player being sent off.

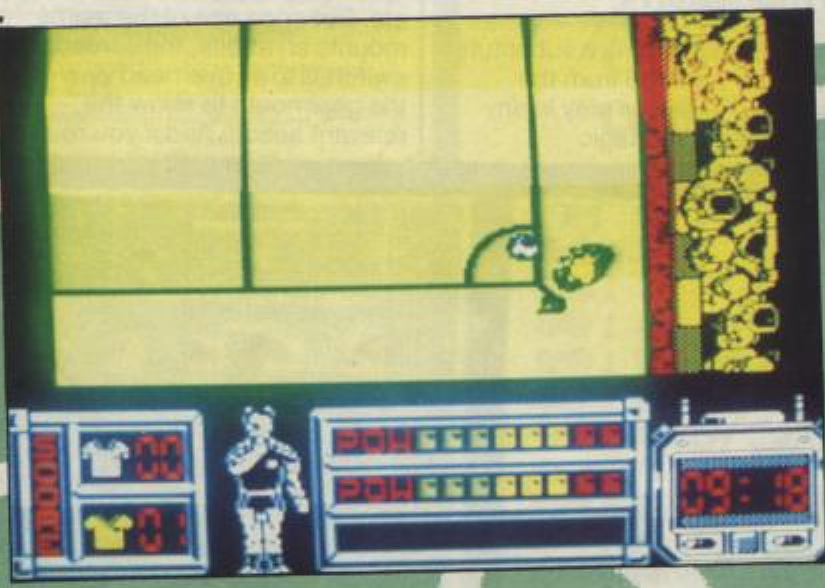
Throw-ins, corners and goal kicks are handled identically to normal kicks. Goal keepers are totally automatic, tracking the ball and kicking it upfield when they've caught it. But they're no Peter Shiltons – they can't even jump up or dive.

Match graphics are surprisingly colourful, although as a result, the scrolling of the pitch is jerky. But generally, presentation is good, especially on the title screen where a wide range of options can be selected while listening to a lively 128K tune.

The bad news is that despite its fine appearance, Gary Lineker's Hotshot loses out in the playability stakes. The pitch is far too large, making passing very difficult – the only way of knowing the positions of off-screen players is by watching a tiny 'radar' screen! But probably the biggest flaw is the way the game time continues even when the ball is dead. This means that the side in the lead can just waste oodles of time – this may be realistic, but it's still irritating.

Another problem is that the computer teams aren't very intelligent, and are therefore easy to beat. However, as in most sports simulations, the two player mode gives the greatest enjoyment. *Gary Lineker's Hotshot* is fun for a while, although ultimately second division stuff.

PHIL 62%



▲ Taking a corner while the fans cheer

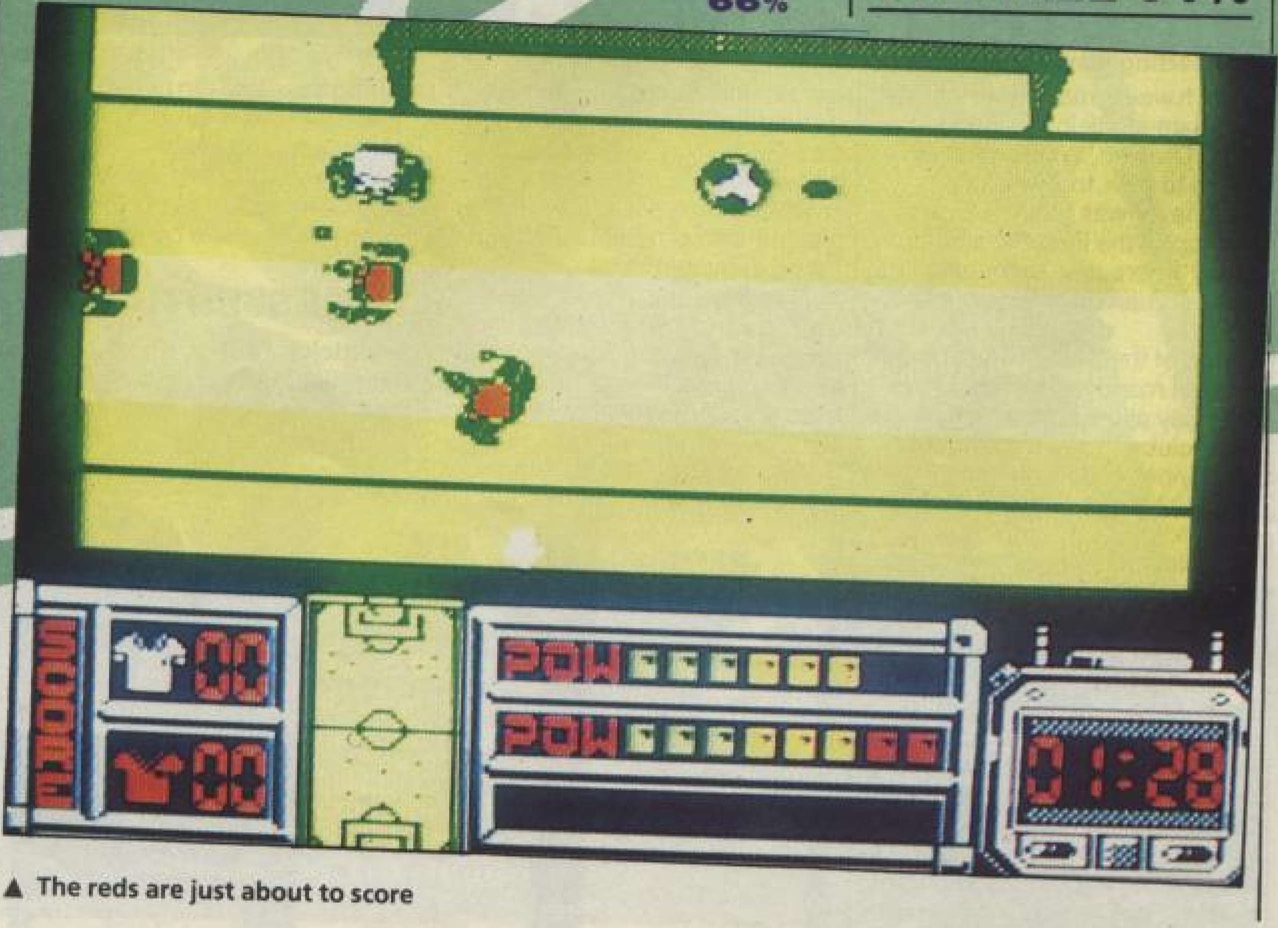
MARK **I can't say that I have been overly impressed with Gremlin products of late, but this does go a small way to redressing the balance. Graphically the game is good with a bird's-eye view of the little players thundering around the pitch, fouling each other like crazy. This is one thing which did annoy me a bit: you only get a lousy free kick after being fouled – Vinnie Jones would have a field day! Still, despite a few flaws, *Gary Lineker's Hotshot* is worthy of consideration.**

66%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: surprisingly colourful, although the scrolling's jerky
Sound: catchy 128K title tune, decent effects
Options: one or two players. Choose from sixteen teams
General rating: a technically sound, but simplistic soccer simulation

Presentation	71%
Graphics	72%
Sound	75%
Playability	66%
Addictive qualities	62%
OVERALL	**64%**



▲ The reds are just about to score

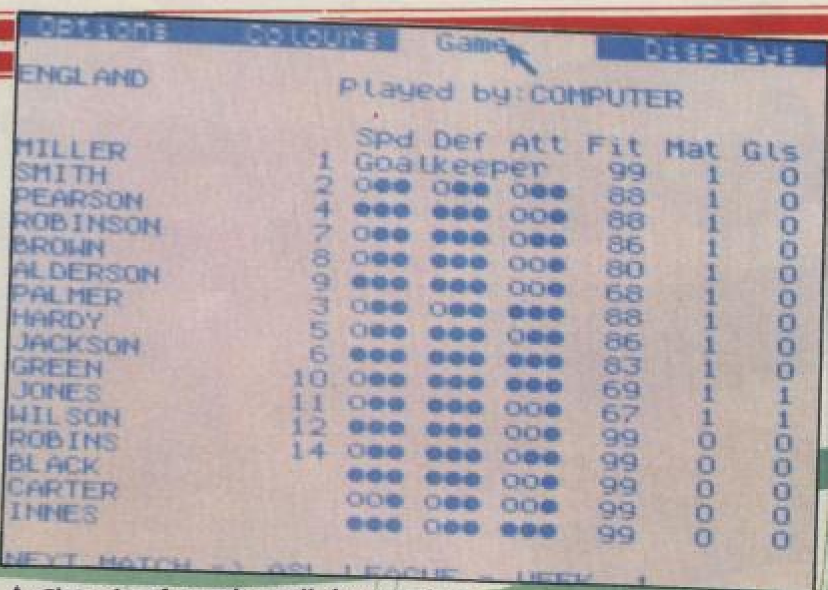
Emlyn Hughes INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

● ***What does* he *know about football?!***

Producer **Audiogenic**
Latest score **£9.95 cass**
£14.95 disk
Author **Graham Blighe, Terry Wiley, Andrew Calver**

'Emlyn shoots straight from the hip!' proclaims the blurb on the inlay. But we at CRASH promise to ignore details of Mr Hughes's private life and just look at the game . . .
SCOTTISH SMIRKER: Well Greasie, who d'yi think'll win today's match?
GRINNING GIT: I dunno, it's a funny old game, but probably the team without the Scottish goalie!
SCOTCH ON THE ROCKS: That's not very nice o'yi, some of the best goolies are from north of the border.
GREY-HAIRED GRINNER: Not the ones under *your* kilt!
THE WEE MAN: Why, I'll brain yi, yi stupid Sassenach!
PHIL: Oy, you two, get out of my comment!

Phew! What a cheek, they've already got their own TV show to talk rubbish on. So, not wasting any more time, *Emlyn Hughes International Soccer* combines football management with arcade action. A multitude of options may be selected, using a simple pull-down menu system. The most important of these allows you to pick the players and substitutes for your team out of a limited squad (players cannot be bought and sold). Each individual player has a fitness level and three skill levels for running speed, defensive skills, and attacking skills – these can all be altered by the player. Any of eight international sides can be player/computer controlled in League or Cup matches, or a season comprising both types. Friendlies can also be arranged to test various team combinations.



▲ Choosing from the pull-down menus

One or two human players can take on a computer-controlled side in a match, while pitch/player colours and match length are definable. The 3-D view of the pitch is similar to that used in *Match Day II*, scrolling horizontally to follow the ball. A single player is controlled at one time, indicated by a pointer above his head.

As well as dribbling and spitting (only joking!), players can kick and head the ball, and even perform sliding tackles, although careless use of these can lead to free-kicks and penalties. Kicking the ball is achieved by pressing and releasing the fire button – the longer it is held down, the harder the shot will be. Height and direction of the kick are controlled by moving the stick when fire is pressed.

Despite its many pre-match options, *Emlyn Hughes International Soccer* puts the emphasis on arcade skills rather than strategy. Selection of different players doesn't seen to have much effect in the match itself. Still, actually playing matches is fun (especially with two players), although play is not quite up to the high standard set by *Match Day II*. One annoying flaw is that the game has a tendency to abort in two-player mode, though this is great if you're losing! (Flippin' cheat! – Mike).

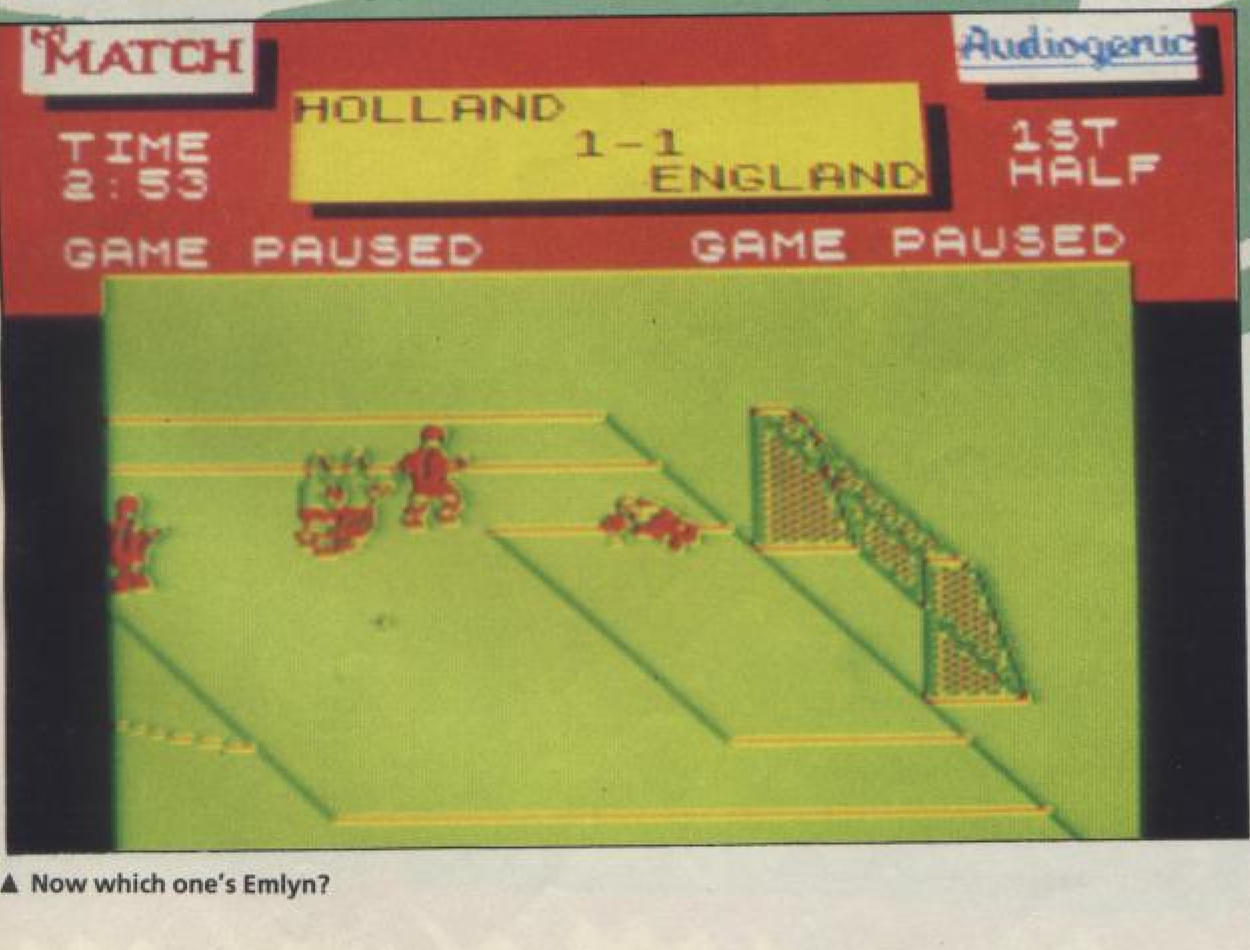
PHIL 74%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: well-animated players, choose your own colour scheme
Sound: simple ref's whistle effects
Options: too many to mention
General rating: a brave attempt to combine football management and arcade skills, which doesn't quite come off.

MIKE Well, someone must like Emlyn Hughes (his wife perhaps?!), and that person is quite likely to be pleased with *International Soccer*. Though my first impressions of the game were that it wasn't very good (to say the least!), perseverance makes it seem a bit better. After two or three hours, it becomes quite bearable. Ten quid though, is a lot to pay for a game, and personally, I don't think it's worth it! Playability is alright, as it seems to be free from annoying bugs. But the addictiveness largely depends on how you feel about football, and (at the risk of incurring the wrath of Phil!) I don't like it! (Are you totally deranged?! – Phil). It is one of the better Spectrum soccer games though, and I enjoyed playing it (even though Phil kept resetting when I was winning).

66%



▲ Now which one's Emlyn?

Presentation	70%
Graphics	72%
Sound	30%
Playability	72%
Addictive qualities	68%
OVERALL	**70%**

PREVIEWS





Following the success of *Captain Blood* (76%, Issue 62), **Infogrames** are set to release another game with outer space connotations. ***Purple Saturn Day*** takes the player out to the sixth planet of the solar system to witness the spectacular atmospheric phenomena which turns Saturn's skies purple. On this special day, which happens once a year, the inhabitants of many worlds gather to compete in the Galactic Olympiad. You play a representative from Earth who has to survive four gruelling events: Ring-Pursuit, Tronic-Slider, Brain Bowler and Time-Jump (I wonder who will boycott this year's meeting). If you wish to represent your home planet (Earth . . . we presume!), the game will be available in March, priced £9.95 cassette, £14.95 +3 disk.





Has your computer ever driven you to utter an expletive? (Of course it bloody hasn't! – Nick). Well, one of the less offensive ones has been turned into a game. ***Aaargh*** is a city-stomping, building-smashing, monster-thumping all action game in which you play a monster, searching for five stolen eggs. These are scattered over twelve different cities, so being the kind-hearted soul that you are, you smash up the buildings in search of the prize. However, you aren't the only one after the eggs. Various other refugees from Japanese 'B' movies (Edwina Currie?!) are also after them, so you have to biff the baddies as well. *Aaargh* will be available on the Melbourne House label in May, retailing at £9.99 on cassette only.





After the crunch, bang, wallop fun of *Skateball* and the promised aggro in the soon-to-be-released *Iron Lord* (see the feature on page 45), French software house, **Ubi Soft**, will shortly be allowing ***Puffy's Saga*** to escape onto your computer. Puffy (who looks suspiciously like Pac-Man) and his sweetheart Puffyn are lost on an alien world. Your task is simple: just guide the daring duo around the tortuous mazes on each level to escape before the nasty denizens eat them for lunch. *Puffy's Saga* will see the light of day in April for £8.99 cassette, and £14.99 +3 disk.

We previewed ***Running Man*** back in issue 60, but at the time no screen shots were available. So now here's a taste of things to come when the game appears 'soon' from **Grandslam**. Based on the excellent book by Richard Bachman (alias **Stephen King**) and the film starring **Arnold Schwarzenegger**. The game is set in 2019 when a young police officer called Ben Richards is arrested for a crime he didn't commit (they always say that! – Lloyd). Faced with the prospect of either a long time in prison or appearing on prime-time TV, Richards chooses the latter – wrong choice! He must participate in a popular gameshow, Running Man. Here, innocent people are branded criminals and hunted down by trained killers. Those who survive thirty days are promised a billion dollars, but the games are rigged and the odds brutal – the best score so far is eight days . . . hmmm.



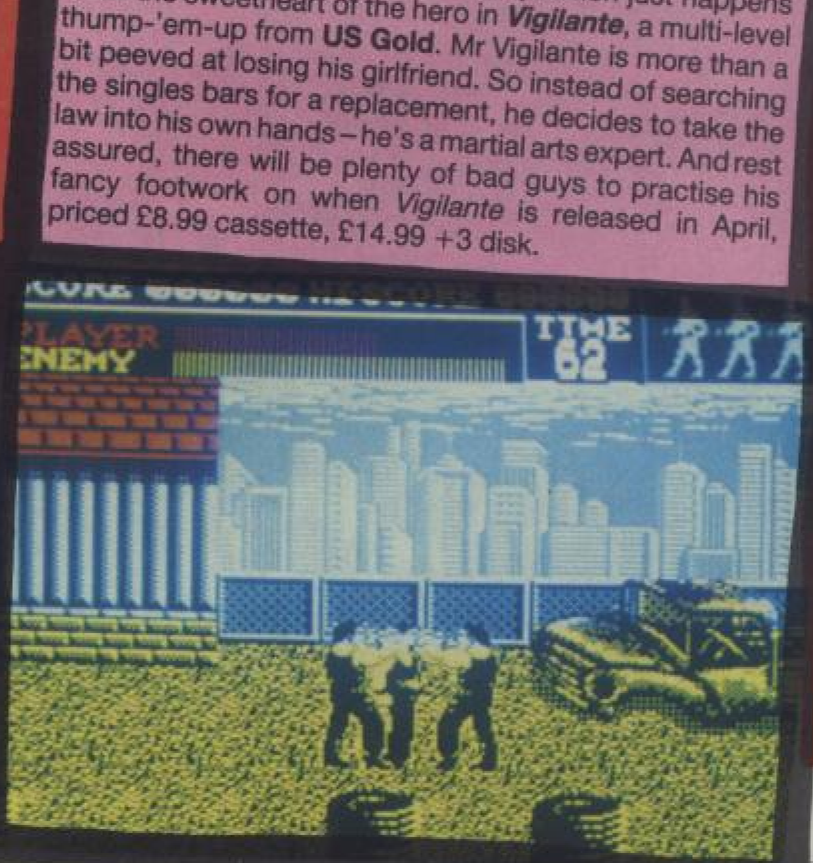


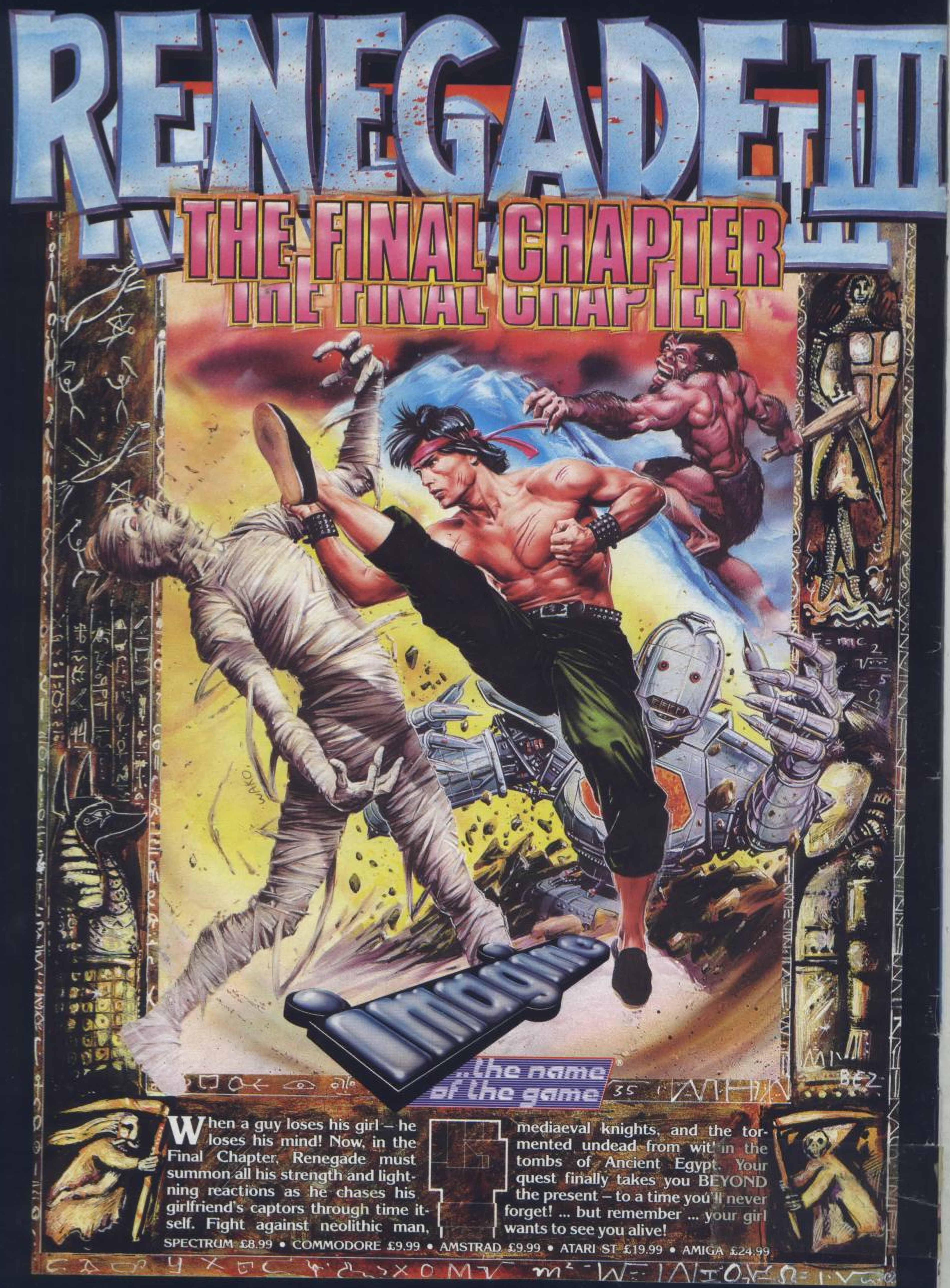
If you're one of those people who actually start of the front of the magazine you'll no doubt have seen the ad for ***The Tower Of Light*** and its incredible offer, **exclusive** to CRASH. If you buy the game with the ad you get a superb **Competition Pro 5000 Clear** joystick, worth £15.95, absolutely **free**. Since the game itself is only £12.95 on tape, and £14.95 on +3 disk, this a pretty amazing offer and marks the debut of a completely new software house: **Caris Software**.

The Tower Of Light is Caris' first release under their own name – they previously programmed *A Simple Case Of Espionage* (72%, Issue 60) ages ago for Skyslip – and is a fantasy role playing game. The plot concerns the eternal struggle between good and evil. A particularly evil character has tried to overthrow his master, The Dark One. He fails miserably, and in fleeing for his life, comes across a green and peaceful land which he decides to terrorize. He gives himself the title of The Dark Lord, and sets about summoning hordes of evil followers to this land, changing it into a barren hell hole.

Now enter not one, but *four* heroes: a wizard, elf, dwarf and a human. Their task is to find the Tower Of Light, retrieve the King's Crown and find another monarch. However, all they know about the tower is that it's magical and no evil creature can enter it. Its exact whereabouts are unknown, and plenty of evil creatures stand between the stalwart band and success. *The Tower Of Light* should very soon now.

Shock! Horror! Madonna has been kidnapped! But calm down, pop fans – the Madonna in question just happens to be the sweetheart of the hero in ***Vigilante***, a multi-level thump-'em-up from **US Gold**. Mr Vigilante is more than a bit peeved at losing his girlfriend. So instead of searching the singles bars for a replacement, he decides to take the law into his own hands – he's a martial arts expert. And rest assured, there will be plenty of bad guys to practise his fancy footwork on when *Vigilante* is released in April, priced £8.99 cassette, £14.99 +3 disk.




RENEGADE III
THE FINAL CHAPTER
imagine
...the name of the game
When a guy loses his girl – he loses his mind! Now, in the Final Chapter, Renegade must summon all his strength and lightning reactions as he chases his girlfriend's captors through time itself. Fight against neolithic man, mediaeval knights, and the tormented undead from within the tombs of Ancient Egypt. Your quest finally takes you BEYOND the present – to a time you'll never forget! ... but remember ... your girl wants to see you alive!
SPECTRUM £8.99 • COMMODORE £9.99 • AMSTRAD £9.99 • ATARI ST £19.99 • AMIGA £24.99